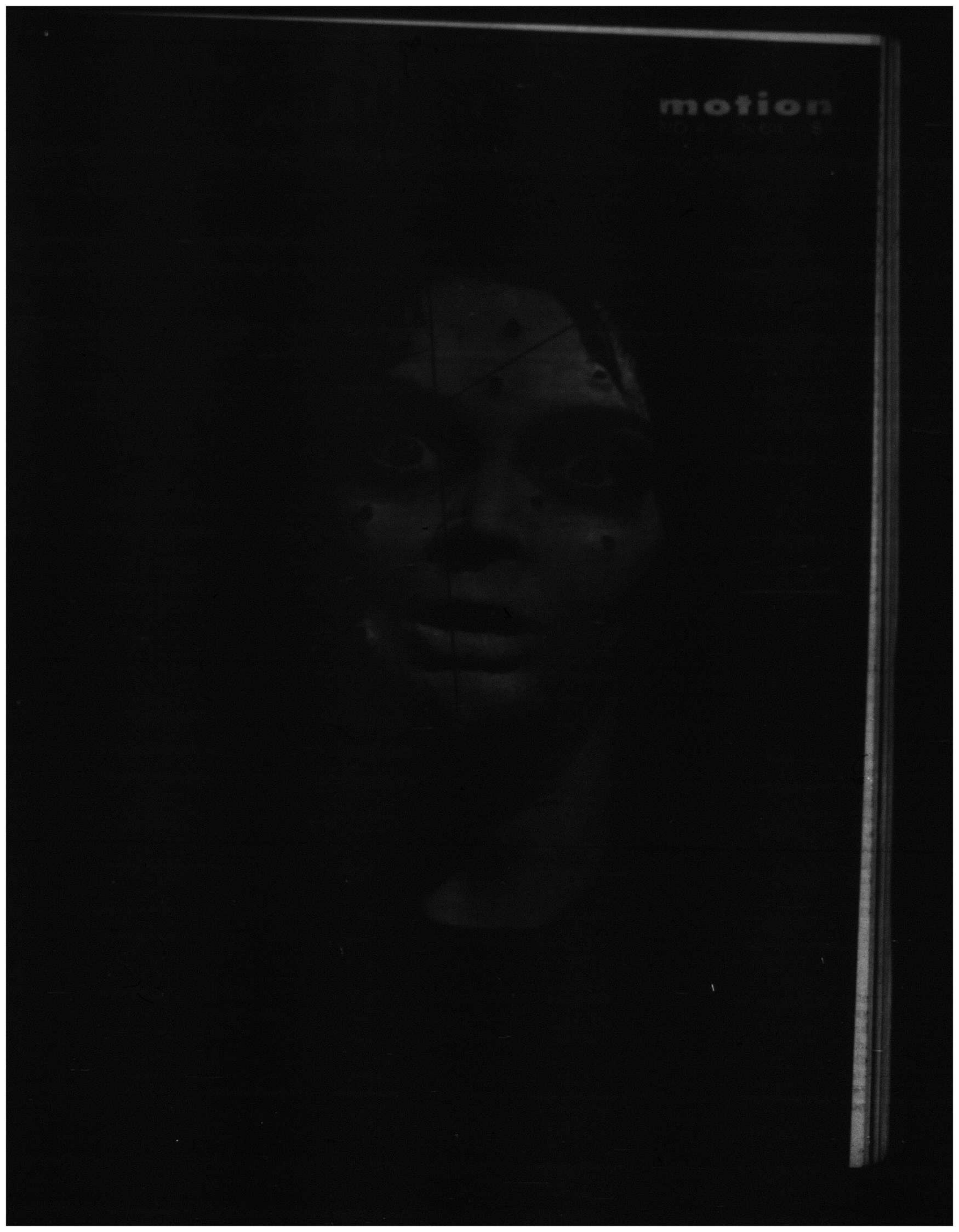
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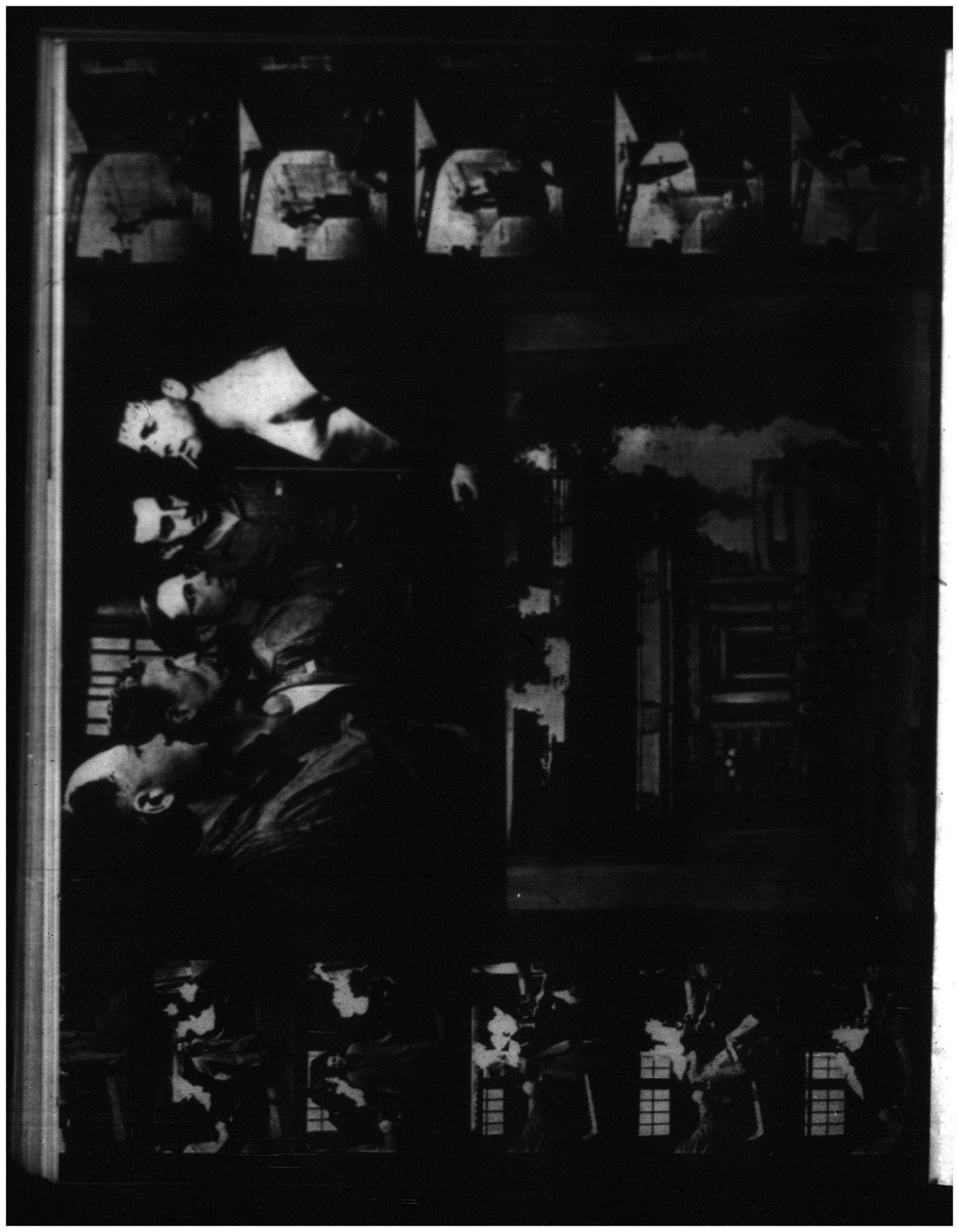

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COMPANION TO VIOLENCE AND SADISM IN THE CINEMA

VERNON: All furnish'd, all in arms;
All plum'd like estridges that wing the wind;
Bated like eagles having lately bathed;
Glittering in golden coats, like images;
As full of spirit as the month of May,
And gorgeous as the sun at midsummer;
Wanton as youthful goats, wild as young bulls,
I saw young Harry, — with his beaver on,
His cuisses on his thighs, gallantly arm'd,—
Rise from the ground like feather'd Mercury,
And vaulted with such ease into his seat,
As if an angel dropp'd down from the clouds,
To turn and wind a fiery Pegasus,
And witch the world with noble horsemanship.
SHAKESPEARE, "King Henry IV"
Pt. I, Act, Sc. I (1597).

MRS. PEACHUM: You know, my dear, I never meddle in matters of death; I always leave those affairs to you. Women, indeed, are bitter bad judges in these cases; for they are so partial to the brave, that they think every man handsome who is going to the camp, or the gallows.
Air III. — "Cold and raw", etc.
If any wench Venus's girdle wear,
Though she be never so ugly;
Lilies and roses will quickly appear
And her face look wondrous smugly.
Beneath the left ear so fit but a cord
(A rope so charming a zone is!)
The youth in his cart hath the air of a lord,
And we cry, There dies an Adonis!
JOHN GAY, "The Beggar's Opera",
Act I, Scene IV (1728).

As he spake this, he threw off his great monk's habit . . . He hurried, therefore, upon them so rudely, without crying gare or beware, that he overthrew them like hogs, tumbled them like swine, striking athwart and alongst, and by one means or other laid so about him, after the old fashion of fencing, that to some he beat out their brains, to others he crushed their arms, battered their legs, and bethwacked their sides till their ribs cracked with it. To others again he unjoined the spondyles or knuckles of the neck, disfigured their chaps, gashed their faces, made their cheeks hang flapping on their chin, and so swinged and belammed them, that they fell down before him like hay before a mower. To some others he spoiled the frame of their kidneys, marred their backs, broke their thigh-bones, pushed in their noses, poached out their eyes, cleft their mandibules, tore their jaws, dash'd in their teeth into their throat, shook asunder their omoplates or shoulder-blades, sphacelated their shins, mortified their shanks, inflamed their ankles, heaved off of the hinges their ishies, their sciatica or hip-gout, dislocated the joints of their knees, squattered into pieces the boughts or pestles of their thighs, and so thumped, mawled and belaboured them everywhere, that never was corn so thick and threefold thrashed upon by ploughman's flails, as were the pitifully disjoined members of their mangled bodies, under the merciless baton of the cross. If any offered to hide himself amongst the thickest of the vines, he laid him squat as a flounder, bruised the ridge of his back, and dashed his reins like a dog. If any thought by flight to escape, he made his head to fly in pieces by the

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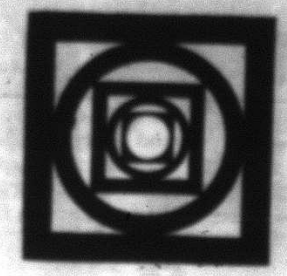

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and

Jean-Pierre Mocky's **The VIRGINS**

lambdoidal commisure, which is a seam in the hinder part of the skull. If any one did scramble up into a tree, thinking there to be safe, he rent up his perinee, and impaled him in at the fundament. If any of his old acquaintance happened to cry out, ha, Friar John, my friend, Friar John, quarter, quarter... he... gave them... so many knocks, thumps, raps, dints, thwacks and bangs, as sufficed to warn Pluto of their coming, and despatch them a going. If any was so rash and full of temerity as to resist him to his face, then was it he did show the strength of his muscles, for without more ado he did transpierce him, by running him in at the breast, through the mediastine and the heart. Others, again, he so quashed and bebumped, that, with a sound bounce under the hollow of their short ribs, he overturned their stomachs so that they died immediately. To some, with a smart souse on the epigaster, he would make their midriff swag, then, redoubling the blow, gave them such a home-push on the navel, that he made their puddings to gush out. To others through their ballocks he pierced their bum-gut, and left not bowel, tripe, nor entral in their body, that had not felt the impetuosity, fierceness, and fury of his violence. Believe, that it was the most horrible spectacle that ever one saw.

RABELAIS, "Gargantua and Pantagruel", Book I, Chap. 27; Transl., Sir Thomas Urquhart (1532).

SCENE IV. Another part of the forest.
Enter the Empress' SONS, DEMETRIUS and CHIRON, with LAVINIA, her hands cut off, and her tongue cut out, and ravish'd...

MARCUS ANDRONICUS: Speak, gentle niece, what stern ungentle hands
Have lopp'd and hew'd and made thy body bare
Of her two branches, those sweet ornaments,
Whose circling shadows kings have sought to sleep in,
And might not gain so great a happiness
As have thy love? Why dost not speak to me?—
Alas, a crimson river of warm blood,
Like to a bubbling fountain stirr'd with wind,
Doth rise and fall between they rosed lips,
Coming and going with thy honey breath.
But, sure, some Tereus hath deflowered thee,
And, lest thou shouldst detect him, cut thy tongue.
Ah, now thou turn'st away thy face for shame!—
And, notwithstanding all this loss of blood,—
As from a conduit with three issuing spouts,—
Yet do thy cheeks look red as Titan's face
Blushing to be encounter'd with a cloud.
Shall I speak for thee? shall I say 'tis so?
O, that I knew thy heart! and knew the beast,
That I might rail at him, to ease my mind!
Sorrow concealed, like an oven stopp'd,
Doth burn the heart to cinders where it is.

SHAKESPEARE, "Titus Andronicus", Act II, Sc. IV (1593).

An indefinite number of examples could be quoted to show how men throughout the ages have tried to eliminate, suppress or disown their aggressive instincts. Aggression has been generally regarded as a deplorable flaw in a creature who, it is supposed, ought by nature to be pacific and gentle. This negative view of aggression is neither realistic nor constructive... People complain of all kinds of impulses in themselves which they find distasteful murderous impulses, dishonest desires, perverse sexual compulsions and a host of other objectionable feelings. It is never of much use to try to get rid of such impulses direct. The energy which they contain must be expressed in some way or other; and it is only when a new and acceptable path for the expression of this energy is made possible that the pathological sympton disappears. One can blame aggression on the devil; or attribute it to the Fall; or indulge oneself in fantasies of a past when it was not, or of a future in which it will have no place. But all these ways of regarding aggression are attempts to deny it or get rid of it, and, as such, are doomed."

ANTHONY STORR, "Is Aggression Wholly Destructive?" in "New Society", Vol. I No. 1 (1962).

Horror pictures fascinate us because they are artificial nightmares. We don't need to be afraid that we may not wake up. We ARE aware that we have made them ourselves. They are not as overwhelming as a battlefield. They are not as frightening as a nightmare... we grown-ups have learnt that suffering, unhappiness and even death belong to life. We like to forget it, but when we forget it we are empty and shallow... we ...need tragedy to remind us and to keep us working on our conflicts and on the tragedy which belong to life.

Children are closer to anxiety, therefore they are closer to horror... Altogether it is a tendency in our time to be too concerned, to be too anxious... We are always in danger to feel like guilty parents who have failed their children. In other words, we are inclined to become over-protective.

...[Horror films] provide... the horror... [children] need, which in the old-fashioned education before the first World War was given to other children by the teacher.

DR. MARTIN GROTJAHN, "Horror, Yes It Can Do You Good" in "Films and Filming", Nov. 1958.

To the generation which has grown up during the last few years, art is seen as something for kicks; films which stab at the nerves and the emotions; jazz, and the excitements surrounding it; Method acting, with its carefully sustained illusion of spontaneity. Violence on the screen is accepted as a stimulant and anything which can be labelled as slow or sentimental is suspect... But those of us who grew up during the war, when violence was perhaps too close to be also a handy stimulant... are not easily inclined to divorce art and morality or art and society in our minds.

PENELOPE HOUSTON, "The Critical Question", in "Sight and Sound", Autumn 1960.

Life is impoverished, it loses in interest, when the highest stake in the game of living, life itself, may not be risked... It is evident that the war is bound to sweep away this conventional treatment of death. Death will no longer be denied; we are forced to believe in him... Life has in truth become interesting again; it has regained its full significance.

FREUD, "Thoughts for the Times on War and Death" (1915).

If the theater has been created as an outlet for our repressions, the agonized poetry expressed in its bizarre corruptions of the facts of life demonstrates that life's intensity is still intact and asks only to be better directed.

ANTONIN ARTAUD, "The Theater and its Double" (1938).

Why do we devote an entire issue to violence and sadism?

Because they are there.

They show every sign of being here to stay. As long as love. They are distinct. Soldiers, boxers, butchers may be violent but not sadistic, and there are many popular ways of being sadistic without being violent. Much violence is legal and admired. Sade was a babe in arms compared to the Committee of Public Safety. Most of the hecatombs of history were inspired by fear, by logic, or by high moral purpose, or by all three.

The general public's enjoyment of physical violence in the cinema has a sadistic element but is far less sadistic than certain vociferous ignoramuses seem to assume. The suspense connected with it is not sadism but its opposite, pity and terror. The audience frequently identifies with the victims of screen violence: tough guys like Alan Ladd are well known to take it far more than they dish it out. War films are not primarily sadistic; they gratify a curiosity about war whose off-screen origin should be obvious. Westerns are not primarily sadistic: their main appeal is that of manliness, physical energy and the warrior virtues. Horror films are not primarily sadistic; their appeal is usually mostly masochistic.

If you wish to diminish the public demand for screen violence, first banish it from the history books (Cannae, Agincourt, the Thirty Years War, Waterloo, the Somme, Arnheim). Banish it from the Headlines. Not a word, please, about megadeaths and overkill; we don't wish to know that. Eradicate crimes of violence and notions of punishment as retaliatory. Remove at their root children's temper tantrums, bowdlerise their dreams, eradicate egoism. Abolish hatred, competition, frustration. Remove the masses' feeling of helplessness in the hands of the law, the state, the politicians, and They. When you have done all that, do let us know.

Meanwhile we make no apology for this issue.

Only for its being so incomplete.

We dedicate it to: —

BLACK SUNDAY

Britain's own, Barbara Steele, plays the seventeenth-century witch whom the Holy Inquisition thought they had fixed in the pre-credits sequence. They brand her between her milk-white shoulders, they hammer a spiked mask into her face and entomb her in a crypt facing the cross. But two hundred years later a rashly materialistic doctor sets her free. A drop of his blood revives the tattered flesh that hangs on her bones, the scorpions that inhabit her eyesockets scuttle in terror as her re-created, shining eyeballs fill them once again. Mario Bava's camera tracks, probes and prowls through stone corridors, cobwebs and graves, often leading us to nothing very much but building up a remorseless uneasiness until that extraordinary moment where, on her slab in the crypt, the vampire lies panting, her emaciated fingers twisting, her eyes rolling in slavering ecstasy as she invites the mesmerised doctor, "Come to me, kiss me, you will die, but you will know bliss beyond the reach of mortals — you will be one with me and do my bidding and I will have my revenge!" At this point the film virtually ends, or at least gets wildly out of hand with a plethora of chasing and grappling in secret passages and trapdoors, and reminds one that the film's original audience was Italian peasants. The sarcophagus exploding gets a good laugh and this absurdity contrasts with the admirable scene where the witch's serf, at her command, rises from his grave, pushing up the earth slowly, slowly... such fidelity to physical details can make anything chillingly credible. The film rallies for the last few minutes, from the starkly nonchalant revelation of the fact that the beautiful witch from the neck down is a skeleton covered with straps of raw muscle. The shots of the phantom carriage bounding darkly in slow motion is as beautiful as anything in any horror film anywhere; there is no real horror without beauty, as Keats would have said if he could have beheld BLACK SUNDAY. Even the rough dubbing nostalgically recalls the laboured acoustics of the early Frankensteins, and you too could have a Whale of a time if the film weren't totally verboten by our censor in case it corrupts you, you dogs, you. — RAYMOND DURGNAT.

BLUEBEARD

Like Crippen, the hero of Perrault's fairy-story has, rather surprisingly, never been adapted into the criminal hagiography of the popular cinema. A Jerry Lewis version is long overdue, but while waiting there is always Christian-Jacques's agreeable spoof BARBE-BLEUE. Pierre Brasseur, ranting a la Prevert, is a kindly hubby at heart, too timid to ask his wives to alter their irritating tics and pretentions. So he hides them all away in a luxury downstairs and, being a great practical joker, pretends he killed them, so as to frighten people. His beard isn't really blue, but black; he dies it for the sake of his public image, and dictates his own legend to Perrault, who turns up "déjà!". The dialogue is fine spoof-Prevert, but the plot is sub-Prevert, which clips its wings. There is a rare example of ortication — Bluebeard, pursued by the tavern-keeper's cheeky daughter (Cecile Aubry) has her thrown into bed, not of silk and satins, but of stinging-nettles. — R. E. D.

COOK, Jnr., Elisha

The eternal fallguy. Too slow and timid for the Bowery Boys, or he might have been their Dopey. Stunted and pallid with Dead End grime, his soft, desperate voice and moon-face express strange yearnings. He is distant kin to Marty. He has courage. In SHANE he is left lying dead in the mud by Jack Palance. In THE BIG SLEEP Humphrey Bogart watches helplessly as a giant thug makes the little man drink poison. After his jam session in PHANTOM LADY he is strangled by strong-fingered sculptor Franchot Tone. He is the scriptwriter in HELLZAPOPPIN who drinks a glass of water just after being unplugged full of holes by the irate film-director. If anybody knows a film where he gets the girl, please tell us — we like him enough to go and see it. — RAYMOND DURGNAT

CRIMINAL, The

Before the credits, close-ups of three faces, intent, cunning, furtive, distrustful: three men are gambling for thousands. Then the camera moves back, and we see that the thousands are chips (cigarettes?) and the men are in a prison cell. This image is a complex metaphor for the modern world of materialism, where crime is big business and big business (by implication) crime, and where each man is imprisoned within the limitations, inadequacies and degeneracy of his own desires; in it is implicit the violence that explodes periodically in the course of the film — the violence of men under intolerable pressures (both internal and external) of constraint and frustration.

The sense of this imprisonment is maintained throughout the film: in the interior scenes, by the oppression of a constrictive decor that presses in upon the characters; in the scenes amid nature, by the characters' indifference to the freedom of their surroundings. The credits appear over a single long take that gives us not only Kelly's return to prison but the essentials of what "prison" means: the claustrophobic effect of enclosure whose narrow bounds are defined by the camera-movements; the loss of privacy, where one's every gesture is watched for its significance not only by the warders but by one's fellow-prisoners; the threat to one's individual identity in the removal of personal possessions and in the uniformity of dress. Bannion's apartment, with its alcoves, its constricted space, its cell-like bathroom, its effect of windowlessness, where again one feels that one's every gesture is under surveyance, that all are waiting and watching for the unguarded moment and where one's personal identity is preserved only through a jealousy guarded prestige based on material possession — where Bannion has the illusion of freedom — is but an extension of the prison decor. Bannion imprisoned in the material world.

Losey is reported as having said that he has learnt more from studying the works of painters especially those of the early Renaissance — than the films of other directors. One sees just why "Sight and Sound" found THE CRIMINAL "artificial": it quite lacks the busy surface associated with naturalism. We have here not the more-or-less random reproduction of the external world we find in neo-realist films (British as well as Italian) but a paring down of reality to significant essentials: an art based on selectivity

rather than inclusiveness. Losey goes straight to the essential in his protagonist and builds his film outwards from that. The decor becomes the outer projection of the characters' inner lives: not, as in Minnelli's HOME FROM THE HILL, a substitute for the creation of meaningful human relationships. The violence of the film is the outward manifestation of the characters' drives to break out of their spiritual imprisonment. The quality of the violence — the prison riot — its note of hysterical intensity (the characters', not the director's) is determined by this oppression of décor. In this we have a continuation of Losey's previous work, and THE CRIMINAL, offers obvious parallels with THE PROWLER, whose desert has a function similar to the frost-bound landscapes of the later film. BLIND DATE is essentially about Jan's process or freeing himself from all that is represented by the décor in which we first see him — from the prison of his own illusions.

The theme has its most forceful expression, perhaps, in TIME WITHOUT PITY. Here time itself becomes man's ultimate prison, and the "race against time" of thriller tradition takes on the significance of a metaphysical principle, finding its extremest expression in the apparently incidental episodes of the woman (Renee Houston) so obsessed by time that her entire apartment is thronged with clocks. The desperation of men trapped and striving to burst from their prison has never been expressed with such single-minded intensity. Particularly, the theme crystallises in the character of Stanford (Leo McKern — one of the most astonishing performances in the whole history of the cinema (and it is about time somebody said so), who somewhat upsets the balance of the film. The constraint under which Stanford lives is not merely his guilt but his whole situation, his marriage and the cultural-social pretensions he has forced upon himself, represented by his apartment. He is the Goya bull of the film's opening, hemmed in, prodded beyond endurance by goads from all sidest. During his furious drive, the abrupt removal of this intolerable constraint (his cars are the only permissible outlet for his terrific energies) results in the terrifying frantic intensity of his sense of release. The sequence is the focal point of the film; it has its parallel in THE CRIMINAL in the sequence of the prison riot. The acting in TIME WITHOUT PITY is pitched throughout on the verge of hysteria (Losey's control has never been so strong), and the spectator, while never being permitted to become personally involved with the characters to the point of complete identification, is kept throughout at this same pitch by the implicit struggle for supremacy in every shot between hysteria and control, so that, while few films have achieved such an extreme emotional impact, the emotion aroused is never of the sort that dulls one's perceptions, but has the effect rather of keeping the spectator pitched to hyper-awareness.

Opposed to the décors of prison and apartment in THE CRIMINAL is the frozen winter landscape, where Bannion, in his black overcoat, crawls like an insect over a snow-covered field beneath an open sky, the only time in the film we see him in long-shot. The sequence is accompanied by raucous jazz: Bannion in the snow carries his prison within him. In the prison, in the flat, the characters fit into the décor, belong to it; here they stand out from it, alien. It is here, in the world of indifferent nature, that Bannion, dying, sees himself and his life for the first and last time, his judgement on it expressing itself in his terror of the pains of hell: the only after-life he can imagine is one of eternal imprisonment. We are not, perhaps, "moved" by his death; the tone is too uncompromisingly far from any subjective pity, one is numbed by its harshness and forbidden the comfort of tears; it is among the most terrible deaths ever shown on the screen.

It has been maintained that the film glorifies Bannion, and it is certainly true that in relation to the universe he inhabits (and against which he must be judged) he is a heroic and admirable figure. In the context the film gives him he has far more positive qualities than those exhibited by, say, the heroes of Antonioni in relation to their world. It is these admirable qualities — and, more important, their limitations — that bring about his downfall. The reckless, generous extravagance (not merely in terms of money but in terms of danger) of buying the ring for Suzanne stands out, in the world of the film, as a heroic gesture; at the same time, Bannion is characteristically measuring love in material terms — it is the cost of the ring that matters — and the gesture, which seemed the culmination of his freedom, results in his return to prison. The downfall of most tragic heroes is brought about by some inherent weakness in their make-up: Bannion's "weakness" is his comparative admirableness — his spontaneous, generous nature, which makes it impossible that he should survive for long in the world of the Mike Carters. He hasn't the ruthlessness or the calculating cunning to obey the rules of big business.

The curious, apparently irrelevant incident of the piano-tuner in Bannion's flat is the only time a character from a "normal", non-criminal social milieu enters the film, and he enters it precisely at the moment of Bannion's greatest apparent freedom. He is, in fact, an extension into "normal" society of the notion of imprisonment. He is respectable, conformist, adhering to a moral code that Bannion is quite outside, and when Bannion, naked beneath his bath-robe, carries in Suzanne wrapped in a towel it is evident that he suffers. Yet, a man with a sensitive musician's ear, he must earn his living tuning pianos for such people (there is an implicit contrast between the uses to which the piano will be put and the music to which the piano-tuner — who clearly takes a pride in his work — could be expected to respond), and he can only smile at them his timid, deferential, self-deprecating smile, victim and prisoner of the capitalist system. The incident also defines the relative psychological freedom of Bannion and Suzanne as against Mike Carter. If the lovers "hurt" the piano-tuner — and in fact we feel him respond, if wanly, to Suzanne's spontaneous gaiety in Bannion's arms — it is simply through being, un-selfconsciously, themselves; but Carter has consciously to annoy and disturb him by striking a dissonant note while the tuner is trying to work. The tiny incident is clearly connected psychologically with Carter's earlier desire to beat up Maggie: the sadist, for all his smiling elegance, cannot resist any opportunity to provoke, and depends for his sense of identity, for all his air of sophisticated self-

Stanley Baker as "The Criminal". "But the hardest cases of them all are the screws that run the Moor."

assurance, on arousing such reactions in others. The scene, so deceptively simple and off-hand, so entirely free from directorial nudgings, is a good example of the density characteristic of the film as a whole.

The more conscientious British directors would have made of Owen's script a "social protest" film with interludes of violence to liven things up and sugar the pill. Losey's concerns go far beyond that territory. The scenario, he has said, is but a "springboard" for the director, and we can see this concept at work both in the film as a whole and in many small incidents. Take for instance the sequence where Pauley tries to cure Clobber of saying "like": all of it that could be represented on paper constitutes little more than a banal "gag" such as we have encountered in innumerable undistinguished pictures. But by the time the sequence is over we have been given a precise definition of the relationship between the two men, each one's evaluation of the other, and a chance to form our own relative evaluation of both.

What disconcerts — gives even, at first, to the superficial eye a sense of emptiness — is Losey's empirical-objective attitude to man, his determination to show us human beings cleanly, without the intervention of his own subjective feelings about them. The people in THE CRIMINAL are not "rounded characters" in the accepted sense, still less types. We are **told** nothing about them — nothing of their backgrounds, why they are what they are — we know only what we see. Very few films have looked at men with such intensity of concentration, pouncing on the revealing gesture or expression, isolating it for greater emphasis or clarity. The gestures, the expressions, don't **explain** the man, they **are** the man. Two apparently simple shots of Barrows — his flanking of the key on the iron banister-rail during the beating-up of Kelly, and the sudden strangely beautiful and disturbing (disturbing **because** beautiful) close-up of him at Mass — give us a human being of richness and complexity. "Truth isn't absolute, but it is precise" (Losey).

The film is not perfect. Losey is not, except at rare moments, as successful with the women as with the men: there is even at times a slight conventionality in his presentation of them. The original sin here, as is now notorious, lies in the plot-outline that was forced on Losey and Owen by their producers. Losey wanted the whole film to take place in prison, and the whole Suzanne aspect of the plot was quite foreign to his original conception. That he and Owen struggled to make it meaningful, with intermittent success (Suzanne constitutes for Bannion a possible release from his personal prison) is clear; that they were here relatively uninvolved is also clear from certain carelessness (Suzanne for no discernible reason has two surnames)that suggest some desperate last-minute re-writing. This side of the plot never quite recovers from its basic inconsistency: the Suzanne of the later scenes is not and never has been a woman who turns up naked in the beds of strangers. But there are things that one would not willingly be without: the little scene of Suzanne's prison visit, for instance; and Margit Saad's terrible convulsive gesture as Bannion is shot down, more heart-rending than any tear-drenched close-up.

Losey's is an art based on respect: 1. Respect for the audience, for Losey credits us with awake minds and perceptive and analytical faculties, never jogs our elbow and tells us what to think; demands, indeed, like Preminger, a concentration and intentness he will not often receive (witness almost any review of THE CRIMINAL). 2. Respect for humanity, for his aim is to show us men as they really are without the distortions imposed by subjectivity, without overt condemnation, and without pity (TIME WITHOUT PITY is the Losey title par excellence). However depraved his characters, we are always made to share a basic respect for them, the respect we pay because of our common humanity. His films are entirely free of disgust or contempt (one has only to compare THE PROWLER with ACE IN THE HOLE of Wilder), and the objectivity with which he regards his protagonists has in it nothing of "looking down on": it is a matter of distance, not height. 3. Respect for the cinema as an autonomous art, the art of mise-en-scène, a respect not as yet shared by Losey's British colleagues, among whom the old concept of film as the more-or-less efficient illustration of a script still holds: to compare SATURDAY NIGHT AND SATURDAY MORNING with THE CRIMINAL is to be on the way of defining the art of cinema.

There is more overt comment in Losey than in Preminger, and in a sense his films are less pure (which doesn't necessarily mean less good). In EXODUS, for instance, there is really no overt comment at all, which is why the critics found the film so baffling (none of them realises that he was baffled). There is clear comment in THE CRIMINAL, on the other hand, in the circle of men gambling for thousands that turn out to be chips, and its parallel in the two men circling Bannion's body at the end vainly searching for the thousands he has buried, while Suzanne walks off at a tangent; and in the sudden shot of the open sky, the camera descending at once to show the prison on earth below, then fading to the circling of prisoners that forms a back-

ground to the final cast-list: a comment on a society that has made money its god, and hence imprisoned itself in a vicious circle. These are things that Preminger would not have done, any more than he would have been guilty of the clumsy darkening of the background during Pauley's monologue which is one of THE CRIMINAL'S rare lapses in technique: Preminger never reaches that level of explicitness.

But in Losey's films no character is allowed to escape from the basic law of objectivity of presentation. Though every shot of THE CRIMINAL is unmistakably Losey's, he is not in the film, as a presence, in quite the same way in which Antonioni is present in his films. It is significant that where L'AVVENTURA is shot in beautiful and subtle gradations of grey, corresponding to its creator's view of life, THE CRIMINAL is notable for the sharp clarity of its black and white. That the black and white takes on a poetic-symbolist quality (Suzanne in white taking on Bannion's black coat at the end of the film) is of secondary importance. Losey has wished to make his spectators see the more clearly: has wished to make external reality as clear and simple as possible in order to discover the true complexity that underlies it.

Neither is the spectator allowed to become closely identified with the characters—the law of objectivity applies equally to Losey's way of looking and to the way in which he wishes the spectator to see. Nothing could be more foreign to a Losey film than the sort of intense audience-identification that Hitchcock plays on in VERTIGO or PSYCHO.

In THE CRIMINAL Catholicism is merely an alternative form of imprisonment. The shot of Barrows at Mass can stand as Losey's comment on religious experience, and he finally brings home to us the tragic waste that is the subject of the film by making us share Suzanne's horror as, dying, Bannion babbles in helpless and uncontrolled panic of the pains of hell. In THE WRONG MAN (in which imprisonment, as in THE CRIMINAL, can be understood as a metaphor for the spiritual condition of the protagonists) Catholicism is the only possible release: the whole sense of the film lies in the process (the word is connected with the French for "trial") through which Manny Balestrero is led to "pray for strength".

The contrast between the very tone and methods of these two great artists is rooted in this distinction. When Hitchcock makes a film his role is analogous to that of God: to Hitchcock the actor is an instrument (it will be noted that the same could be said of Bresson), to Losey a collaborator. To Hitchcock the shooting of a film is the precise realisation of preconceived images; to Losey it is a co-operative process of search and discovery. Hitchcock's assumption of absolute authority determines his attitude to the audience, gives him the right to control and manipulate the spectator in order to modify or transform his moral sensibility. Losey, the agnostic — and it is this that links him with Preminger — repudiates any such right (which would doubtless appear to him unpardonable arrogance, as it would be in anyone not profoundly rooted in authoritarian Catholic tradition) in every shot. He addresses the spectator as it were on equal terms, taking pains to keep him so detached that emotion should not interfere with his perceptive and analytical faculties (". . . the only principle of Brecht's with which I am in complete agreement"). Ultimately one sees Losey as the "free" artist and Hitchcock as imprisoned within his own strict system of rules. It could be claimed that Hitchcock's method (and this is confirmed by the evidence) is likely to produce more **perfect** films, while Losey's have a compensating richness which perfection of this kind excludes: to put it concretely, the equivalent of Leo McKern's unbalancing of TIME WITHOUT PITY, which is at once the weakness of the film and its chief glory, could never have occurred in a Hitchcock picture. In any case it should — but apparently doesn't — go without saying that Losey's recent works are incomparably the greatest "British" films so far made. — ROBIN WOOD

CRUSTACEA, Death by

"They weigh about a pound each and they are as big as saucers... They are coming up the mountainside in their tens of thousands, great red and orange and black waves of them, scuttling and hurrying and scraping against the rock... And tonight, in the middle of their path, they are going to find the naked body of a woman pegged out — a bouquet spread for them — and they will feel the warm body with their feeding pincers, and one will make the first incision with his fighting claws and then... and then... Perhaps they will start at the throat or the heart..." Even more filmic than Dr. No's threat is what actually happens to Honey, and it's pity the film missed it out. Filmgoers with guilt feelings about boiling lobsters alive, or about identifying with the negro clarinettist who eats a crab alive in Bunuel's ISLAND OF SHAME, may expiate it by seeing THE VIKINGS where after Tony Curtis's falcon has gouged out Kirk Douglas's eye, Kirk Douglas stakes Tony Curtis out on the shoreline, hoping he will be eaten by the crabs that come up with the rising tide; or Roger Corman's ATTACK OF THE CRAB MONSTERS, with its twenty-five-foot mutations which not only devour human beings but assimilate the knowledge in their brains and imitate their voices. (Speaking of assimilations, will we ever see on the screen the ultimate horror, the puddle-cum-worm on an unnamed planet in Damon Knight's uniquely sickening short story, "Four-in-One"? — RAYMOND DURGNAT

CURTIZ, Michael

(also Kertez, Mihaly and Courtisse, Michel)

The period circa GONE WITH THE WIND, when so many of the most important Hollywood directors struck and held form, was not particularly violent. Their camera might pan across a body with a "Shot for Looting" sign hung round its neck and Gary Cooper and George Raft do get hung by the thumbs from the rigging in Hathaway's 1937 SOULS AT SEA. However there was nothing like the present day accumulation of blood-spattered torsos in the work of Milestone, Sam Wood, Wellman, Dieterle, Victor Fleming or more uneven directors like Cukor, Edmund Gouldng, Hawks or John Huston.

One splendid exception to this rule was Michael Curtiz with a background in sanguinary European

Sadism a la Curtiz. The villain is fingering Errol Flynn's wounds in "Captain Blood" (1935).

Biblical epics. Errol Flynn was regularly chained and flogged in the films they made together and a grappling iron or long bow shaft was sure to be thwacked into any leather jerkin pulled tight in its wearer's efforts to molest a support cast wench. The glorious 1938 Flynn-Curtiz ADVENTURES OF ROBIN HOOD has one of my favourite lines, the one delivered by the retainer who complains to the Sheriff of Nottingham — "It's getting so that a tax collector can't put a hot iron near the eye of a Saxon dog without getting a black arrow in the throat."

In the forties Curtiz' work reflected the drift towards the more psychological approach to sadism, like Fleming's DR. JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE where Spencer Tracy manages to incarnate evil without being shown in any act more depraved than bad table manners. Now Curtiz' interest was in showing the total humiliation of surgeon, Gene Lockhardt by SEA WOLF Edward G. Robinson or the James M. Cain relationship of Joan Crawford and Zachary Scott in MILDRED PIERCE. This element seems to have completely worked itself out by the time Curtiz and Jerry Wald made their "To Have and to Have Not" adaptation THE BREAKING POINT, in 1950. The failure and amputation which the John Garfield character must face at the end of this powerful film are given none of the old relish.

However Curtiz was not a director to work in any style for long. In THE COMANCHEROS the last film he completed before his death we can again notice the foreground littered with the familiar olive-oil-sweat coated bodies, spread eagled in the sun. — BARRIE PATTISON

DARK SIDE OF THE LIGHT FANTASTIC, The

Sadism and violence in the musical? One can almost sense the reader's questioning disbelief. One only has to think back though. Usually, it's the sublime things one recalls: capering rodents, zestful trolly rides, live-sick brothers whirling their axes in the snow, Serafin dancing out his fancy as Macoco. But like the dark side of the moon, the dark side of the musical does exist. All one has to do is remember.

Cases of outright, downright sadism, naturally enough, are rare. Some musicals, the Sam Katzman variety especially, might be playfully thought of as sadistic, but that's a different argument entirely. But whilst music has frequently been used to underscore moments of sadistic action — there's that torture scene in THE BIG COMBO (director: Joseph Lewis, '55 — see: **DEAF AID, Torture by**); also there's Hume Cronyn's loving rubber-hose walloping of Sam Levene, to Liebestraum's soft strains, in BRUTE FORCE (director: Jules Dassin, '47) — the all singin'-and-dancin' equivalent of PEEPING TOM (surely the ultimate in sadistic films proper?) has yet to be realized. Perhaps one day Vadim or Dassin might attempt it. A JAZZ JUSTINE, or an up-tempo version of ŒDIPUS REX (suggested title: OH BOY, DO I REMEMBER MAMA).

Cases of violence, however, are commonplace. Think of the SLAUGHTER ON TENTH AVENUE ballet with its shootings, beatings and bleedings; think of WEST SIDE STORY with its carvings, near-rape, murder and betrayal. Death, disaster and the dance are the mainstay of these attractions. Think again, of the edge of violence which has a habit of turning up in Vincente Minnelli's work: the "Limehouse Blues", ballet from ZIEGFELD FOLLIES with its shooting-matches and a man dying slowly from a gun wound; of the hounding of a man to death episode from BRIGADOON; of the beatings, explosions, pistol-whippings, ambushes, fights, and sundry betrayals that make up "The Girl Hunt", ballet from THE BAND WAGON; of the Halloween sequence in MEET ME IN ST. LOUIS in which tiny tots describe in detail the horrible deaths they would wish upon some neighbours.

In regard to this vein of volence, it's significant, I think, that once when I asked Minnelli to name me a musical, then un-filmed, that he would like to adapt to the screen, he immediately instanced WEST SIDE STORY. Again, during the same conversation, he told me how he planned to shoot a scene from the film he was then working on, GIGI. At the end of the big love song in which the hero

(Louis Jourdan) sings at length about his falling in love, Minnelli planned to have the gentleman savaged by a swan. A scene, alas, which was not included in the finished print!

Death and violence have walked hand-in-hand through the following musicals: OKLAHOMA (the death of a Jud with a knife in the gut); LOVE ME TENDER (the gunning down of Elvis no less); PORGY AND BESS (a high mortality rate here what with murder and an odd hurricane or so); PETE KELLY'S BLUES (a regular deluge of gunning, slapping and double-crossing); CASBAR — the musical version of PEPE LE MOKO and very good too (a knifing, a whipping, the final gunning-down of its rogue-hero); THE KING AND I (a burning and a whipping); NEVER STEAL ANYTHING SMALL (crooked malevolence galore including the tossing of acid into someone's face); BLUE SKIES (a very nasty episede in which Fred Astaire falls from a high piece of stage scenery whilst drunk); ZIEGFELD GIRL (in which Lana Turner is beaten-up by Dan Dailey); CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY (with songs by Deanna Durbin and killings of a homicidal Gene Kelly); YOUNG MAN OF MUSIC (songs by Doris Day, spectacular self-destruction by Kirk Douglas); the 1943 version of THE DESERT SONG (melodies mingled with Nazi killings and Arab revenge).

Then again, there's that hand-smashing episode by Gene Kelly in FOR ME AND MY GIRL, the lashing Nelson Eddy gets in GIRL OF THE GOLDEN WEST, the gunfights and the fiery conclusion of THE HARVEY GIRLS... ... ... one could go on and on and on. In any discussion of violence in musicals, however, two films stand out. The, songs and surgery content of WITH A SONG IN MY HEART, and YOU'LL FIND OUT — a 1944 movie of great charm and a melodic score by Johnny Mercer which just happened to star Boris Karloff, Peter Lorre, Bela Lugosi and George Zucco! —

JOHN CUTTS

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DASSIN, DU RIFIFI CHEZ

The rioting convicts of BRUTE FORCE are obeying a categorical imperative: the desire for liberty. The Italian village in LA LOI (after Vailland's novel) has a feudal social structure so hierarchized, and economically so stagnant, that the only way up is via — brute force, brute cunning and brute bluff. Pierre Brasseur as Don Cesare, the Monarch of the village bears a curious load of significance — not just feudalism, but also, somehow, the wisdom of the Ancient Greeks, as if Dassin were trying to remind us that power is an eternal absolute. In the first reel the peasant girl (Gina Lollobrigida) round whom so much of the plot revolves begins by fondling Don Cesare's boot, and in the last reel she lovingly cradles his venerable head to her bosom as he dies. His Hier Apparent is the gangster (Yves Montand); but it is Mastroianni as the Engineer who wins the girl. Comparative weakling though he is, the hardheaded peasant beauty recognises that the new Law — i.e. power — is that of Economic and Organisation Man.

In a society where the self-sovereign warrior loses out to the good citizen woman wears the pants, and she virtually overpowers the engineer. The sexual humour is insistent and saucy — e.g. Gina sitting astride a grainsack lets the paper-money it hides pour out over her prone engineer like fruit showering from a cornucopia. It is a great pity that the script's implicit philosophy is betrayed by an over-tactful, almost ingratiating direction. Perhaps Dassin attributed the box-office disappointment of CELUI QUI DOIT MOURIR to its "heavy" message, and here, drawing on his experience as a fine comic director, took the film just a little too lightly. The villagers' pecking order is treated with such speed and lightness that the film falls between neo-realism and a NEVER ON SUNDAY fantasy village, a sort of thicker CLOCHEMERLE. Dassin dwells too long and too fondly on Don Cesare and his Greek pottery, and visually the film is too white, slick and fluid — violence never explodes, but flows excessively smoothly, like water.

As Gina is being flogged by her next-of-kin on the kitchen table for refusing to marry the husband they want for her, her head is hilariously haloed by a basin of beans. The amiable blasphemy (she is a "saint" of the life-force being mildly martyred) is an echo of CELUI QUI DOIT MOURIR. As the novel's title, "Christ Recrucified", implies, there is a parallel to "The Man Who Died"; if D. H. Lawrence's Christ concludes by espousing Lawrentian sensuality, Dassin's Greek reincarnation of Christ recognizes the necessity for forcible, communal action (Castroism? Spartacusism?) rather than a solitary death on the cross. Pick up thy shotgun and follow me... Put thus crudely, and Dassin puts it thus crudely, the message is not anti-Christian, for orthodox Christians argue against pacifists that it may be one's Christian duty to wage war with shot and shell (rather than forgive up to seventy times seven), and to make little children suffer (by dropping incendiary bombs on them). But there is an anti-Christian undertone in the way the message seems to split the Christian slogans down the middle. Again, a courageous script is sold short by scrappy and hectic direction, a curious lack of emotional emphasis.

NEVER ON SUNDAY, unconcerned with violence, is slightly hors série but worth mentioning. The hero is an American tourist vainly trying to convert a happy Greek prostitute to his Christianised, Platonic ideal of culture. Her rejection of it, and of the tragic spirit in Greek drama, makes her a true heir of Aristophanes. His intellectualizing primness leads him to support the capitalistic pimp against her (a Marxist image for middle-class culture?). The Greek theme is foreshadowed by that of LA LOI and suggests that Dassin has grasped more clearly than most of the sweetness-and-light brigade the Dionysiac undertow of Greek thought.[1] Violence-wise, the most disturbing moment is during a cafe-brawl when one man's grip of another suddenly takes on the aspect of a caress; one is reminded of the sequence in BRUTE FORCE where the prison warden truncheons a convict to death to the "Liebestod's" screamdrowning strains.[2]

In BRUTE FORCE there are further religious undertones — the convicts, all more sinned against than sinning, plot their escape in the prison chapel, furtively ("the real religion is liberty" — a summary of CELUI QUI DOIT MOURIR). Later a stoolie is lashed to the front of a truck in the position of the crucifixion, exposed as a "sacrifice" to the warder's machine-gun fire.[3] The climax, a prison riot led by Burt Lancaster, is an astounding paroxysm of mobs versus machine-guns, fire against concrete, humanity against society — staged and orchestrated with a truly classic precision.

Paradoxically, Dassin's "free" films about violence are "weaker" in style and impact than commercial films working within the framework of "safe" formulae.[4] DU RIFIFI CHEZ LES HOMMES is the middle film between two forms of production, and has an undertow of seriousness which perhaps hasn't been noticed sufficiently.

It compares conveniently with THE ASPHALT JUNGLE. In Huston's film, the nervous tensions of crime are evoked **oppressively** — in Dassin's, romantically.[5] Huston is compassionate but moralistic — maybe his film is more "realistic", at least until let

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[1] See, for example, "The Birth of Tragedy" (Nietzsche), or "The Greeks and the Irrational" (C R. Dodd).

[2] Lest all this seem to make Dassin a monster, I hastily add that there is a grip-caress in TIREZ SUR LE PIANISTE and a Liebestod murder between loving males in LES COUSINS. Don't shoot the critic either, come to that — films deal with kinky subjects just as freely as modern novels or plays, though on the condition of being ambiguous.

[3] Again it's no use trying to make Dassin a scapegoat. The film was produced by Mark Hellinger and written by Richard Brooks (cp. ELMER GANTRY).

[4] We haven't seen NIGHT AND THE CITY. THE NAKED CITY has already been fully commented and is more "conformist" in moral.

[5] The romanticism is only enhanced in the British version by our fatuous censorship, which excised much of the violence, of which the heroes were the victims, thus making crime seem more attractive than ever.

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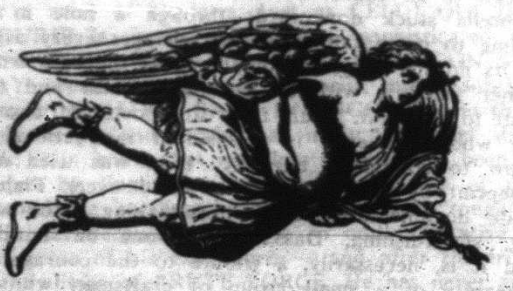

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down by Sterling Hayden's last drive out of the asphalt jungle to die near a farm. This episode seemed to me to have the forced sentimentality of the last reel of THE SNIPER, and I was more convinced by the tragic exuberance of Jean Servais's dying drive. Huston's characters are "criminals who beneath it all are people"; one feels the director has accepted the conventional view that criminals, almost by definition, are not just maladjusted vis-a-vis society, but psychologically maladjusted within themselves. Dassin's heroes are "people who happen to be criminals".

The opening sequence of RIFIFI does vividly establish the wretched, friendless, almost paranoiad texture of much underworld life (the legal norms of the ratrace have a smoother "front"). But, once the story is under way, Dassin's criminals are far better off from every point of view than, say, poor law-abiding Paolo Stoppa, the steward in LA LOI. The scene where Nino and his buxom mistress chuckle and squeal in the showerbath is pre- and super-Vadim — and finds a converse in the relationship of Jean Servais and of the mistress who deserted him during his long prison sentence. He takes her to his hotel, strips her of her protector's jewels, and then, instead of sleeping with her as the bed glimpsed beyond the door seems to be advocating, flogs her — treatment for which she never seeks revenge. Carl Mohner, who took to crime to provide for his wife and child, is killed by his child's kidnappers — this self-frustration gives an edge to his wife's bitter comment that those who accepted poverty showed more courage than he. But the gang does not live a "the criminal way of life" so beloved of simplistic morality, any more than a football team lives something called "the sporting way of life". Maybe it is the moral categorizing which is more romantic — is the law-abiding citizen's way of shrugging off the uneasy feeling that these men **dared.**

The heroes in RIFIFI are aristocrats as well as criminals. The twenty-minute, wordless burglary sequence, as has often been pointed out, puts everyday objects to an almost Surrealistic use — the inverted umbrella stuck downwards through a hole in the ceiling to catch falling plaster outrages every aspect of its normal usage as completely as the bath whose owner fitted it with an outboard motor and then went to sea in it. Apart from this poetic enrichment, the whole sequence is a splendid instructional on "how to commit a burglary" (and was used as a blueprint by burglars all the world over). Flaherty made documentaries on pottery-making, igloo-building, shark-fishing, Dassin made one on burglary, and it is, necessarily, a tribute to the courage and ingenuity of a small group of craftsmen who not only pool their skill and their loot but entrust one another with their liberty and their lives. This is "The Safe Busters", and like THE DAM BUSTERS it falls into three parts: research, coup, disastrous aftermath. Halfway through the R.A.F. film, Cheshire takes over from the back-room boys; here the burglars see their job through from start to finish and thereby earn a satisfaction which nine-tenths of the audience will live their lives without knowing.

In "La Nouvelle Nouvelle Revue Française" François Nourrisier remarked: "The burglary will be enjoyed enormously... above all because there exists between the four protagonists, an equivocal, passionate bond, something like the virile fraternity of soldiers, the amorous complicity of men amongst themselves, a sort of tenderness of gesture — the manipulation of objects, or to help "pals" — all this oppresses the spectator, touches a second reality, that of the contest... It is a very precious moment for which we must thank Dassin-author, Dassin-actor and his comrades."

At a second viewing, the burglary sequence loses only its will-they-won't-they suspense; its dramatic tensions are undiminished. The courage, comradeship and ingenuity of these craftsmen turn this burglary into a creative act; far from their being parasites on society, it is they who are the superiors of society; what harm is there in this mild pillage of superfluity, compared with their assertion of the sovereign rights of **nerve?** This is a Nietzschean film — by which I most emphatically don't mean it's a Fascist film.

Each member of the gang possesses the secret of heroism — he lives, loves, gives, rejoices **generously.** It is because the bitter rage of Jean Servais is generosity-in-reverse that the audience sympathises with him even as he flagellates his unfaithful inamorata who accepts his **right** to this **excess.** A meaner soul might have tried to persuade himself that "she wasn't worth bothering about" — a common and law-abiding reaction which is very far from virtuous.

But if each member of the gang is a proudly independent individual, the gang becomes a community opposed both to the **mass** and to the **system.** The film's identification of hero with criminal is a summary, but pertinent criticism of our society. It is the virile, selfish assertiveness of these men which in Elizabethan times inspired privateers to loot and sink the Spanish galleons. They are not really rebels; they are as aloof as aristocrats. This is not a film about egoists. It is very important that there is no argument about the division of the loot. Every member of the gang is betrayed by his love, or by his concern, for **someone else.** When the gang find the member whose member who involuntarily betrayed them, they shoot him, and almost his last gesture is to assent in their act — he has been guilty of "criminal negligence", to die is "la loi", the code of conduct, like duelling or the bankrupt financier's suicide. THE SEVEN SAMURAI, THE DAM BUSTERS, DU RIFIFI CHEZ LES HOMMES and THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN are all variations on a theme. Although Dassin's film originated as a follow-up to Becker's TOUCHEZ PAS AU GRISBI it stimulated in its turn a flotilla of imitations — Kubrick's THE KILLING, Melville's BOB LE FLAMBEUR, Hathaway's SEVEN THIEVES, all equally immoral in their sympathies. The demand was worldwide. Dassin's and Kurosawa's films are as meticulous in their insistence on tactics (action as intellectual superiority) as they are exhilarating and terrible in their violence; both centre on **communities** of **individuals** (the finding of recruits is itself an art). Dassin's film also has its "bandits" — the other gang, led by the Grutter Brothers, who are everything that is mean and vicious and who destroy the "aristocrats" of crime. Our heroes' anarchism is hubris, the stolen jewels are the Promethean fire. Whether or not Dassin consciously pre-planned the contrast between the documentary tribute to sheer skill and the finale's hectic, subtly derisory bouts of

Lollo's peasant family try a little unfriendly persuasion.

gunplay, it makes a point about the degeneration possible in freedom.

The lyrical imaginativeness of Dassin's direction could not be demonstrated more clearly than in the final drive. Dassin's style moved from the careful, "closed" compositions of BRUTE FORCE to a loose, open, roving style which might be compared with Renoir's.[1]

Later, with Dassin, this looseness can deteriorate to a weakness of emphasis, but here the balance is perfect. Jean Servais, mortally wounded, is returning a colleague's kidnapped child to his mother. The camera is mounted on the bonnet of the car he is driving; we see him through the windscreen which reflects the roadside trees as they rush past. The effect is of a long dissolve sequence, of phantasgamoria and deliriums; the trees are blurred and confused, as the dying man might see them; and as the reflected branches scatter upwards on the windscreen, those beyond the car move steadily downwards and backwards. The child beside him cries: "Oh, look at the trees!" Later, the Arch of Triumph, seen from a swiftly moving camera, seems to spin around on its own axis, and, cut in on the rhythm, enhances the effect of a delirious world. Within perfect realism, Dassin has found an astonishingly vivid expressionism.

Is RIFIFI a classic? I think it has the same importance (and durability) as the best novels of Sir Walter Scott. And, like so many films — THE DAM BUSTERS, even, perversely, THE SEVEN SAMURAI — it poses, but it poses more directly, the question: what place has our society for dedicated, honourable, constructive violence? where is what Kurt Hahn calls "the moral equivalent of war"? how can the fine ethical inspiration of Socialism be reconciled with the psychological resilience which, saints apart, depends, surely, on a vigorous egoism? How can we deal with the aggressiveness which, quite apart from being basic and pervasive in human nature, is reinforced by a cultural heritage which we will have to live with the next 100 years at least? can "conspicuous consumption" be harnessed to a "potlatch" ethos?

Certainly RIFIFI needs to be balanced by BITTER RICE; indeed, the similarities between CELUI QUI DOIT MOURIR and SPARTACUS are hardly accidental.

But the "tyranny versus violence" situation beloved of so many American directors is too crude to be very positive for us, now. Jimmy Porter and Arthur Seaton face a subtler danger; the grey flannel face of the virtuous citizen who has sold his birthright for a mess of bye-laws. Just as CELUI QUI DOIT MOURIR is, in its script, more sophisticated than SPARTACUS, so, in some ways, NEVER ON SUNDAY seems to me less defeatist, more subtly apropos, than LOOK BACK IN ANGER. Dassin thinks more deeply and subtly than many "message" directors; it is ironic that his films should have been bypassed by English critics, at first because of their resemblance to hard-hitting commercial "toughies", and later because of a style so oddly tentative for a director of his experience — and after the triumphant climax of BRUTE FORCE. He has never again found the expressionism-within-realism of the last reel of RIFIFI; we very much hope he will reconcile within the film his many, but somehow scattered virtues. It will be a great film. — RAYMOND DURGNAT

DEAF AID, Torture by:
occurs in Joseph H. Lewis's THE BIG COMBO, where gangsters turn them up real loud in their victim's ears. Despite its rather conventional plot, this worthy title-mate to Lang's THE BIG HEAT abounds in staggering moments: shiningly hard John Alton photography, the eerie rhythms of car headlamps looming through fog, a sadly masochistic heroine

[1] This development parallels a general shift of Latin cinema during the same period — compare Becker's ANTOINE ET ANTOINETTE with EDOUARD ET CAROLINE, Clouzot's QUAI DES ORFEVRES with LES DIABOLIQUES, Visconti's BELLISSIMA with ROCCO AND HIS BROTHERS, Antonioni's CRONACA DI UN AMORE with LE AMICHE.

(Jean Wallace), a machine-gun murder seen through the eyes of the deaf victim (flash without crash) and a bomb in a first-aid box (flash and crash). A scene where the detective hero (Cornel Wilde) wearily helps a stripper put her shoes on is scarcely less disturbing than a very close friendship between two thugs. (The script is by Phillip Yordan: maybe an NFT season of Yordan films wouldn't be amiss). — R. E. D.

DENTURES, Death by

Bernard Lee has a gag thrust into his mouth in Seth Holt's NOWHERE TO GO. Later we learn his false teeth were "rammed half-way down his throat. He was dead before they could get him to hospital" — I. K. J.

DISEASE

An expert can date a film by its characters' afflictions. We have just completed the leprosy cycle with references direct, (BEN HUR, TIGER VON ESCHNAPUR or THE NUN'S STORY) or oblique, (HERCULES CONQUERS ATLANTIS or THE SPIRAL ROAD).

Cholera is very olde worlde, exactly in period with the 1918 Sidney Franklin — Norma Talmadge THE SAFETY CURTAIN. Even in the Garbo version of THE PAINTED VEIL it is a little anachronistic and really not to be entertained in THE SEVENTH SIN, the Mnrrelli-Ronald Neame re-make.

Worthy of special attention are the realisations of Esmond Knight's attack of beriberi in Powell and Pressberger's END OF THE RIVER, directed by Dereck Twist, (the impression in his leg that just stays there). Yellow Fever had a magnificent innings with Ford's PRISONER OF SHARK ISLAND (1936) and again in Wyler's JEZEBEL (1938) with its finale of Bette Davis being carried down the torchlit human river to the lazerate island, nursing Henry Fonda.

The Black Death on the other hand has been miserably treated. Apart from passing references in the Castellani ROMEO & JULIET and THE PLAIN MAN'S GUIDE TO ADVERTISING the only presentable effort is THE SEVENTH SEAL. Another plague sequence worthy of honorable mention is the section in Preminger's otherwise unremarkable FOREVER AMBER. — BARRIE PATTISON.

DOCTOR NO

There's a deathly hush in the close tonight. — J. Bond is the last man in of the British Empire Superman's XI — Holmes, Hannay, Drummond, Conquest, the Saint et al have all succumbed to the demon bowler, Historical Inevitability, euphemistically referred to in all the best clubs as The Winds of Change.

Whatever Brand X critics may have written, Bond is not an Organisation Man, but a jingoist, almost loveably archaic. If you have forelocks, prepare to touch them now in an Osborne-style farewell to the dear old Edwardiana so lovingly panoplied forth in the first half of the film, as Bond glides along the Establishment's old-boy net. The British Raj, having been reduced to its Caribbean conclave (maintained mainly by American dollars) still does lord it benevolently over jovial and trusting natives and faithful coloured police-sergeants. We might almost be back with Kenneth More on the North West Frontier. Meanwhile out on Crab Key lurks Dr. No, 19th-century Mabuse, last of the warlords, blend of the Yellow Feril and the Mau-Mau, yinging around to the yang of his English coanachronism.

Bond is also the Mike Hammer of the tofs, and the shift from Queensbury rules to neo-thuggery is a response to fear — the fear that Great Britain is no longer so strong that she can win her battles on the playing fields of Eton, but is required to think in the realpolitik terms once left to all those lesser breeds without the law. James Bond is England's "para" and he'd clamp the electrodes to milady's titties as quick as you can say "Victoria Regina". There is an honest and serious treatment of the rationale of torture in THE VALIANT, and maybe we are merely exchanging a slightly hypocritical idealism about the use of force for a new (if less comfortable) lucidity. From another angle, he is the English lord without a dash, jigger or twinge of Christianity and we all know from Simon Raven's "The English Gentleman" how Neanderthal he can be when his hackles are raised. Here, Bond shoots a disarmed man, for nothing, out of temper.

Having said this, we must remind the reader that pulps and politics may interpenetrate but are not tautologous; and to the burning question "Is Bond a bad influence on the youth of today?" we reply, "Oh, do pull yourself together, ducky". Any man with a drop of claret in his veins prefers the rowdy young blood to the wan lay preacher, and, making allowance for the fact that Bond is not a historical personage we like Ian Fleming's hero better than the male nannies of the "New Statesman" who deprecate him. One of the things to be trumpeted in the favour of the Establishment, God bless its heraldic little socks, is that it maintains a healthy anarchic vigour, a proper admiration for guts, grit and attack as virtues in themselves, against the heavy moralizing drizzle that has mildewed English "committed" criticism from the foundations up. Our main criticism of Terence Young's film are that it is (a) decorous (b) prosaic and (c) unconvincing. Fleming's novels gloriously mishmash their Balchin-type verisimilitude with a streamlined-Gothic grotesque, and the latter, regrettably, has scared the film's producers off. Honey (Ursula Andreass), Bond's oddly scientific Girl Friday, doesn't have the smashed nose so lovingly described in the novel. If Bond carries a lighter weapon than he should it is not because he loves Thy Servant a Gun like you or I love Lassie, but, it is basely implied, because Bond is a kindly soul who would rather run unnecessary risks than kill. The tortures (see under "Crustacea, death by") aren't half bizarre enough (the "Monthly Film Bulletin" said it so please don't call us nasty-minded). I think the producers were right to suppress the giant squid, but Dr. No's death (in the reactor) can't hold a candle to the gloriously inglorious fate the novel held in store for him. The facetious credits look like a "Buy Your Kia-Ora Now" advertisement and kill the opening Three Blind Mice episode. The colours are ugly, though sometimes fittingly so, and the film plods along until we set sail for Crab Key: the battle against the dragon, and the decontamination se-

quence, are first-rate and here briefly the film touches the novel's poetry.

DR. NO is highly entertaining and good enough to evoke the novel — to which it fails to do justice. We want to see Nos. 2, 3, 4 et seq. in the Bond canon combine force with finesse. Beau Bond is a dandy, and the style needs the glacial elegance of the pistol in the Yardley's ad ("A Woman's Ammunition"), or of VIE PRIVEE or PANDORA AND THE FLYING DUTCHMAN.

In a "Tempo" interview, Ian Fleming revealed Bond's provenance from a Scots father and a Swiss mother, that both his parents were killed in an Alpine accident while he was a child, that the boy was sent to Eton for one half, expelled after an incident with one of the boys' maids, and then sent to a school of slightly lesser renown. The confluence to two Calvinist traditions (cp. Captain Ahab), the accident up on F6, the subtle but traumatic humiliation via his precocious sexuality — I wish Ian Fleming would write this story, I'd not only buy it, I'd be predisposed to believe it. — RAYMOND DURGNAT

ENGLISH GAME, The
Description applied in DORTOIR DES GRANDES to the finishing-school sport of tying up one of the girls as elaborately as one can and leaving her an hour to struggle free, if she can (inevitably one of the pretty ones gets strangled while helpless by the sex-starved schoolmarm). — R. E. D.

EXECUTIONS
Below: waiting to be beheaded. "No Greater Love" (1960). Opposite: from a British distributor's catalogue, 1905. "Execution of Li-Tang the Chunchus chief of Manchurian bandits: the only animated picture of a Chinese excution ever taken. Gruesome, but faithfully depicting the actual scene."

FAMOUS MONSTERS
Greetings, ghouls, and gather round for another drool-fest. Having descended to the crypt to consult the skeleton staff of loco-Motion, we are sickeningly happy to bring tidings of further spiritual nourishment for you, you Things, you. Alfred E. Neuman will seem as healthy as Douglas Fairbanks Snr, after comparision with the specimens of sentient putrescence gloatingly displayed in "Mad Monsters" and "Famous Monsters of Filmland" (the mags which Better Books daren't stock). FM of F is the original and up to No. 16, MM is an imitation whose pictures are nice but text faecetious. Despite lapses (FM of F No. 12 is devoted mainly to CURSE OF THE WEREWOLF, MM No. 1 gives pride of place to KONGA), both mags may not only brainwash you sicker than sick, but the first also offers a good deal of morbid and invaluable information on the nooks and crannies of cine-traumatics. Practical details of how Hollywood cosmeticians make Monsters gruesome, instead of blowing the emotional gaff, have a curious double-back-action: the thought of grown, wellfed, wellpaid adults sitting down, conferring, planning and gloating over the gore has a Pirandellovian grotesquerie which only

adds to the emotional effect of the actual Thanatotic facelift.

Sample titbits: When King Kong, in the unexpurgated version, shakes the ship's crew off the log, they don't just fall into an abyss, but a giant spider has spun its sticky webs there. And many copies of FRANKENSTEIN have been shorn of the Monster's attempt to play with the little girl by throwing her into the lake — result, the audience naturally assumes the Monster has criminally assaulted her, an implication for which Robert Bloch rightly holds the censors wholly responsible. We know they're paid to have dirty minds, but not to be such ludicrous nitwits that they make horror films both more squalid and less poetic.

From France comes "Midi-Minuit Fantastique". No. 1 is wasted on Terence Fisher — maybe the uncensored, export-only versions are more efficacious than the domestic product, but as far as the English market goes, over the last two years Hammer horrors have sunk to girlish gigles. When in CURSE OF THE WEREWOLF, the camera showed the ominous moon and the music responded with an eerie trill, a lad behind me in the front stalls hissed, "'Sfunny, I never 'ear music like that when I look at the moon". No. 2, consecrated to "Les Vamps Fantastiques", maintains a properly esctastic and uncritical tone towards all morbid fantasies but our backroom boys wish they had provided some sort of guide as to which films were worth venturing far from the crypt for. The browseworthy illustrations range from FREAKS and DEVIL DOLL, through Gracie Fields as the spiderwoman in Basil Dean's SING AS WE GO, to some Surrealist drawings by Labisse which have nothing to do with the cinema at all but are quite something.

Gourmets who like lashings of critical custard on their gore will smack their lips loudest over No. 9 of "La Methode", in which Jean Boullet works over American horror films of the vintage years ('31–'41). Several fascinating essays are garnished with a ripe selection of insults at "Cahiers du Cinema" (in my copy they are heavily inked over, but can be read by turning the page at a judicious angle to a strong light-source). Boullet's timely monograph, describing such virtually "lost" (and always highly censored films as FREAKS, MASK OF FU-MANCHU and DR. CYCLOPS, confirms what we had suspected after seeing KING KONG, and THE OLD DARK HOUSE: you can keep your Godzillas, Things From Outer Space, and mutant ants and tarantulas: the '30s had stronger stomachs and a wilder sadism) than the '50s. Ou sont les monstres d'antan? — RAYMOND DURGNAT

FANTOMAS

The decade from 1910 was the Golden Age of the Serial. In America, Pearl White and Ruth Roland screamed and writhed their way down the millrace, towards the whirling buzzsaw, plumb through the trapdoor into the torture-cellar, or from the aeroplane undercarriage to the roof of the train (watch out for low bridges!). Dr. Caligari had his forerunners in LA FOLIE DU DOCTEUR TUBE (Abel Gance, 1915) and LE SYSTEME DU DOCTEUR GOUDRON ET DU PROFESSEUR PLUME (Maurice Tourneur, 1916). Oh those mad doctors — Tube, Tar, Feather, Caligari, Mabuse, Jekyll, Moreau, Cyclops, T, Blood,

FILM: Not suitable for Brutes and Sadists

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No. In a series on "Un Inconnu Nommé Feuillade" Cinema 61 Nos. 55–58 reproduced some covers of the original "Fantomas" stories, with their eerily poetic guignol. Two angry nuns (really men?) empty revolvers at each other across an empty coffin; a guillotine blade descends on the throat of a screaming man with upturned face; a man in a wheelchair is pushed aside by a sinister horse-van from whose barred rear window an arm waves imploringly; a snout-nosed motor-bus is purposefully crashed through the French windows . . . Fantomas himself was a master-criminal so totally heartless that he would sink an ocean-liner and all who sail in her for the sake of gain, and so became one of the Surrealists' culture-heroes. He inspired the extraordinary series of French crime thrillers, abounding in images of executions, of men in black hoods trussing up their victims in dark cellars, of masterminds and supertecs mysteriously able to walk through walls, of burly men in evening-dress lurking in hotel corridors, their handkerchiefs soaked in chloroform, ready to pounce upon the swan-necked heroines and whisk them off to degradation in Buenos Ayres. — R. E. D.

FAVOURITE MOVIE SCARS

In MAN WITHOUT A STAR Kirk Douglas neatly dishes out to another, his own fate sometime before the movie starts but revealed by long scars across his chest: a parcelling in barbed wire. — B. P.

In THE RIVER'S EDGE, Ray Milland having received a tongue lashing from Debra Paget for not rescuing her when she got gaoled for thirty years, bares his chest to reveal long scars from left to right, proving he was tied up at the time. — C.W.

In ROPE OF SAND, negro labourers smuggle diamonds out of the mines by hiding them in their wounds, from which sadist Paul Henreid loves tearing the bandages. More precious than diamonds is the gift of poesy in Coeteau's LE SANG D'UN POETE where the hero wipes a star off his shoulder, only to find a scar in the palm of his hand, which turns into lips bubbling words as if from underwater, like the gush of words and blood associated with deathbed scenes. — R. E. D.

Joan Crawford's face is disfigured until surgeon Melvin Douglas adds her to his scrapbook of before and after facials in Cukor's highflown A WOMAN'S FACE (1940) — B. P.

FEMALES, Sadistic

In a survey on 600 adolescent schoolgirls, it was discovered that 37% imagined their husbands killed off in old age: "The husband is allowed to fulfil his main biological and economic function before his premature demise, but apparently, is not wanted as a partner in old age." ("School Leavers" by Thelma Veness). I WAS A TEENAGE BLACK WIDOW?

A word, for Susan Cabot, star of some early Cormans, but who has never quite found "her" film. As the mixed-up, stinking-rich sorority girl in THE BAD ONE, who becomes a sadist out of sheer ennui, she torments her dumb, ugly "pledge" (fag) by setting her impossible standards of physical and intel-

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Franju's "Eyes without a Face"

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lectual self-improvement (and then paddling her with baseball bat — in a sequence censored here). As THE WASP WOMAN she tries so hard to stay young for ever that she takes too much royal wasp jelly and turns into a gigantic, intelligent one — a sort of literal QUEEN BEE. In MACHINE GUN KELLY she is the gal behind the gat, deadlier than the male. This victim of the American woman's perfectionism is always sympathetic because she has a je-ne-sais-quoi of the cursed intensity of Lucia Bose in CRONACA DI UN AMORE.

Classic sadistic queendom — Atlantis: — So that the god Proteus will keep Atlantis fogbound and free from ramblin' men, Queen Antinea (Fay Spain) in HERCULES CONQUERS ATLANTIS (vide "supermen") seals her sad-eyed submissive daughter (Laura Altan) up in the rock where she is freed by that bold rover Hercules. For having a second go by sacrificing Ismene to the sea, Queen Antinea deserves everything she gets (a few hundred tons of solid rock). In other Atlantis films Antinea gets a longer run. In Feyder's L'ATLANTIDE (1921) Stacia Napiervkowska as Antinea is prepared not only to seduce her lover, but to offer his girl-friends to the gods as human sacrifice, while in SIREN OF ATLANTIS Maria Montez embalms straying archaeologists, traditional style, in gold. As far as we can discover, in Pabst's 1932 version nothing much happens to Brigitte Helm in the rôle, while in George Pal's ATLANTIS THE LOST CONTINENT Antinea doesn't even appear. Fittingly in Borzage's more recent version, the whole continent is exploded atomically.

A rocky fate similarly awaits Queen Bera (Anouk Aimee) in Aldrich's SODOM AND GOMORRAH. As it happens, Bera has a refined taste in sadism, whether it be sentencing a female traitor to the bizarre death of being hugged by a blind male wearing a spiked T-shirt, or basting well-oiled rebels on a multiple spit.

More often it's safer to forget the idea altogether. Piatro Francisco's THE WARRIOR EMPRESS (SAFFO, VENERE DI LESBO) didn't contain an Empress, let alone a Warrior Empress, that we noticed, although there were a few curvaceous trainee priestesses at the Temple of Aphrodite no doubt to cool our irritation at being frightened in by the catch-penny title. And pretty Chelo Alonso pouting through the steppes as QUEEN OF THE TARTARS (REGINA DEI TARTARI) was no use at all as an Amazon.

Once upon a time, the Edwardian male healed his broken heart by big-game hunting in Africa, but now you're not even safe in space. There's a DEVIL GIRL FROM MARS, and if you make the JOURNEY TO THE SEVENTH PLANETH (in Sid Pink's Swedish film) with the United Nations team, the Protean evil demiurge that lives there disguises himself as the girls you left behind you.

Star example, though least entertaining, is THE QUEEN OF OUTER SPACE in which American spacemen crash on Venus and find it populated entirely by cuties, but ruled by one Queen Yllana who, left bitter and twisted at having her face disfigured by radiation, plans to destroy the Earth. Ultimately she dies in a flash of sparks in her own ray machine, and what's more, at the hands of her own subjects who are only too anxious to get hooked up. Faced with the prospect of an enforced sojourn on Venus for another year, the intrepid spacemen don't even flinch.

But none of these creatures is half as scarey as Peggy Mount.

FLAGELLATION

Gruelling: by Howard da Silva of Alan Ladd in TWO YEARS BEFORE THE MAST. By Karl Malden of Marlon Brando in ONE-EYED JACKS. Here Calder Willingham-Brando succumbed to the corniest formula of American tough-guy-sentimentality, the opposition between the tough, crooked young gunman and the apparently decent, physically weaker, but very sneaky and bad father-figure. The Oedipal overtones are triply underlined by the title's phallic pun, contrasting with the villain's name ("Dad Longworth"), leave us in little doubt that the scene where Big Daddy mashes the youth's trigger finger is a castration symbol. ?

Decorative: of the impassive and blithely unaffected hero in Lang's TIGRESS OF BENGAL where a long lash curls langurously in with a sort of visual adagio on a quick, tripping rythm.

Masochistic: According to Ado Kyrou in "Amour Erotisme Au Cinema" Sacher-Masoch's VENUS IN FURS was filmed in Tsarist Russia in 1915 as GLOIRE A LA FOLIE. Amateurs who firmly maintained that the riding crop which Melina Mercouri kept cracking down on the banisters in THE GIPSY AND THE GENTLEMAN was really meant for husband Keith Michell, and that in THE SLEEPING TIGER haughtily self-righteous Alexis Smith wanted to perform a little corporal punishment on Borstal Boy Dirk Bogarde with her riding crop, should feel satisfied by EVA where, we gather, an exasperated Jeanne Moreau lashes out at doglike lover Stanley Baker.

Sadistic: In Richard Brooks's THE BROTHERS KARAMAZOV Yul Brynner says he has half a mind to beat Maria Schell, who says she would like that. As they drive away in a carriage, he cracks the horsewhip noisily and Maria Schell looks at him so lovingly that a crowded audience at the Baker Street Classic found itself half-laughing, half-gasping at what was "really" going on.

For love: in the DEVIL AND THE NUN. Separated by white, billowing sheets, in the convent attic, exorcist and possessed Mother Superior whip themselves, briskly, and hard, each pretending to himself that he is not passionately thinking of the other. — R. E. D.

FORMICATION

Not forgetting THEM! nor the Donald Duck cartoon where ants carry away not only the picnic goodies, but Donald as well, nor THE NAKED JUNGLE, where Charlton Heston and Fess Parker try to steal a march on well-organised ants, the cruelest is Hathaway's THE REAL GLORY where the patrol led by Gary Cooper and David Niven chance upon Broderick Crawford neck-deep in an ant-heap. — B. P., C. W.

The ants in the palm of the hero's hands in UN CHIEN ANDALOU prepare the last scene, missing from almost all copies of the film but described in

"Premier Plan" No. 13: "The man and woman pursue their melancholy promenade along the beach and fade gradually away while in the sky appear the words: 'In Spring'."

"All is changed. Now, we see an infinite desert. Planted in the centre, buried in sand up to their breasts, we see the hero and the young woman, blinded, their clothes torn, devoured by the sun's rays and by a swarm of insects." — R. E. D.

FRANJU, Georges

Georges Franju, like Luciano Emmer and Pierre Kast (both of whose powerful films on Goya he might easily have made) has remained a fairly minority taste. His development as a director closely parallels that of Resnais, for it was as a documentarist of consummate skill that he achieved his reputation, and he has made only 5 features, all since 1958. PLEINS FEUX SUR L'ASSASSIN and THÉRÈSE DESQUEYROUX have not been shown in Britain and Franju has just started UN ROI SANS DIVERTISSEMENT. As early as 1936 he was helping Henri Langlois to found the Cinémathèque française, and had collaborated with him in a short called LE MÉTRO. But it was not until 1948 that Franju began his highly personal series of documentaries with LE SANG DES BETES.

This brilliant, unequivocal short is the key to Franju's mind and work. The film shows the callous and ruthlessly efficient slaughterers in the abattoirs of Paris. This is no mere undisciplined plea against cruelty to animals; it is rather a consistent statement of Franju's view that beauty and cruelty are never far apart. The ghastly aspect of the film is not so much the manner of the animals' death (Flaherty had shown Nanook's skinning a walrus with equal honesty in 1922) as the hideous simplicity and nonchalence of the slaughterers' actions. They decapitate small calves and rip embryos from cows' stomachs as casually as they light their cigarettes. But what gives LE SANG DES BETES true stature is the quality of Franju's vision, which is as black as, say, Buñuel's, but infinitely more beautiful. The clinical core of the film is clipped about with two magnificent montage sequences, the latter of which shows the dreaded car leaving the abattoirs at dusk and crossing the bridge towards the country "pour rechercher les victimes du lendemain".

Yet Franju is not first and foremost a satirist, however much his later HOTEL DES INVALIDES would seem to suggest. For, to his mind, what causes cruelty is madness; and those who are regarded as mad by society are usually shown by Franju to be saner than their persecutors. This conviction manages to peep through even the most innocuous of his documentaries, THÉATRE NATIONAL POPULAIRE. The opening sequences are slovenly in style and a boring rehearsal scene precedes the startling study of Maria Casarès' playing Lady Macbeth during the sleep-walking episode. It is a passage of trance-like power, completely transcending the theatrical context in which it is set. Casarès moves towards and away from the camera against the black background of the stage, and her taut, outstretched arms show that Franju is interested in **suppressed** violence. Lady Macbeth is full of latent, dark power, but it is controlled within her and is therefore far more impressive than if it broke out crudely. It is there in

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her piercing eyes, and as Franju has said about M. ET MME. CURIE (1953): "As I could not show radioactivity by means of the camera, I decided to put the radioactivity into the eyes of Nicole Stéphane".

Even in EN PASSANT PAR LA LORRAINE, Franju achieves his effects with understatement and hints at disaster. The first handful of sequences is typical of the harmless, commissioned documentary, but behind the dancing of the village folk, Franju suddenly recalls the massacre of Oradour-sur-Glâne and "freezes" for an instant the sole survivor as he walks across the floor amid the crowds (a technical device he uses to indicate the death of Pierre at the end of M. ET MME. CURIE). It is a warning of the scenes ahead, as the peaceful countryside of Lorraine gives way to the living hell of the cokeries and steel plants. Black smoke creeps malignantly from even the most modern factory ("neat and noiseless as a hospital" says the commentary, suggestive again of the madness theme so close to Franju's heart).

The machines are terrifying in their inhumanity. The ore is carried in black buckets on an elevated conveyor like pigs going to the slaughter. Within, the atmosphere is reminiscent of the abattoirs. The gigantic presses are like instruments of torture that slim the molten iron until it forms "serpents of fire" that would cut off a workman's leg if his skill failed him once. One has the impression yet again of suppressed power, harnessed by man for the moment but ready to erupt at the slightest chance. This idea is strengthened by a subsequent image of a chained bull in a field being driven to inseminate against his will. Never once, however, does Franju insert a shot that lacks intrinsic beauty, and the penultimate cut from the molten iron's being poured away on a dark hillside to the children with candles singing as they emerge in procession from the church, is representative of Franju's superb editing. It is the standard of editing, after all, that makes or mars a documentary.

This skill in montage attains its apogee in another early Franju short, HOTEL DES INVALIDES (1951), which resolves into a sustained attack on war. The shock cut becomes Franju's deadliest weapon. "Legend has its heroes, war its victims", says Michel Simon as we switch from a shot of Napoleon to one of a cripple in a bath-chair. A girl's laughing, carefree face breaks up into a shot of a nuclear explosion. Finally there is a cut from the splendid tomb of Marshal Foch to a pathetic group of "the children left behind" by the dead soldiers. Franju's obsession with the deformed transpires in the Church scene, where the veterans of the congregation would not look out of place in the asylum of LA TETE CONTRE LES MURS, his first feature film. They resemble too the rotting gargoyles in NOTRE-DAME (CATHEDRALE DE PARIS) (1957). He is interested far less in the architectural lines of the cathedral than in the "dead stones" that lurk unnoticed behind the building. At one point he brings them alive, figuratively speaking, by zip-panning down from a gargoyle to a dying bird on one of the ledges. These "guetteurs pétrifiés" are for Franju immensely powerful symbols of violence, just as the white doves in LA TETE CONTRE LES MURS and the driven leaves that surround Christiane at the end of LES YEUX SANS VISAGE are symbols of insanity.

LA TETE CONTRE LES MURS is the better of the two Franju features shown in England. The atmosphere is gripping right from the start, as Gérane rides his motor-bike recklessly over some deserted hills near his home (burning gorse is a subtle pointer to the violence that underlies the theme). Yet for the remainder of the film the violence is as usual expertly suggested and rarely shown, except at crucial moments as when, for instance, Charles Aznavour has an epileptic fit while trying to escape from the asylum. But the casual way in which the Doctor holds a hypodermic syringe in Gérane's arm for minutes on end is far more disquieting than even this traumatic scene. The eerie air of a mental hospital pervades the whole work. The men shown here have revolted against the constrictions of society, and as always in Franju, the asylum represents a refuge for the broken, menacing and incomplete. LA TETE CONTRE LES MURS is an excellent attack on the intolerance and lack of sympathy inherent in the community, but is still more valuable as a masterly work by a director who is obsessed by violence and its myriad manifestations, and who is convinced that life is one long struggle for survival against overwhelming odds. The irony of the film is that the most sensitive characters are really those who appear to be the most insane. Gérane is like Kafka's K, whose slight instability causes him to stumble beneath the wheels of society. Any attempt at self-expression is ruthlessly checked by the rulers of Franju's world. The authorities try to tame Gérane just as the steel-workers of Lorraine manipulate the coils of molten iron, and the man's pathetic ignorance is that of the sheep trotting towards the abattoirs in LE SANG DES BETES.

By contrast with LA TETE CONTRE LES MURS, LES YEUX SANS VISAGE (1959) is often undisciplined and unreal. As Alan Lovell has written in his excellent pamphlet on Anarchist Cinema, "The public anxiety of LA TETE CONTRE LES MURS has become the private nightmare in LES YEUX SANS VISAGE". Franju seems to have retreated into his own world completely, or rather into the world of Boileau and Narcejac, in which squat, sinister Citroëns carry captives and corpses to and from a country mansion and a monstrous Doctor conducts a series of skin-grafting experiments in an attempt to repair his disfigured daughter. Yet the film is still extraordinarily arresting and, apart from the rather pretty scenes in Paris, offers perhaps the most obvious evidence of Franju's interest in violence and the delicate boundary between sadism and necessary pain. No one who has seen any of Franju's earlier works could possibly accuse him of having his tongue in his cheek here, or of making a purely conventional horror film. LES YEUX SANS VISAGE is only disappointing insofar as its director's scalpel seems to have grown a little blunt. His approach lacks the razor-sharp intensity that it had in his short films, but the dozen or so of these amount nonetheless to a unique body of work, all of which is strongly stamped with the personality of a man who, like Baudelaire, always sees beyond beauty into an earthly hell of violence and anguish. —

PETER COWIE

Franju's corridors of blood: jolly butchers and insane surgeons.

GOG

During the Korean War, the B feature stream of American production openly expressed a cold-hot war hysteria which rarely appeared openly in A features (notable exceptions: HELL AND HIGH WATER, ONE MINUTE TO ZERO), or was paraphrased by the "Commie spies" theme. In INVASION U.S.A. apocalyptic visions of Russian invasion persuade an egoistic businessman to stop turning out those profitable tractors and switch to full-scale tank production right away. In GOG America's electronic brain, NOVAC, having been built in neutral Switzerland, was, of course, sabotaged in advance, to drive a research plant berserk. The script reduces to a coldly efficient succession of atrocities. In the first reel a sternly lovely redhead, carrying out heartless experiments on a little monkey, is locked in the cold chamber and frost covers her face as she shrieks soundlessly through the little glass porthole and the temperature plummets to −100°C. The Adam and Eve of a new All-American super-race are whirled around on an out-of-control centrifuge and scientists watch helplessly as they die slowly of endless acceleration. A sun-mirror powerful enough to melt steel and boil oceans is focused on a shapely young scientist. Other space-age deaths include: by sound-wave, by radioactivity and choking by a squat robot's steel claws. — R. E. D.

HAEMORRHAGE, Conventional, vari-coloured and underwater

A little blood trickling down the fingers or out of the corner of the mouth are to be expected in the most sedate action film. Among those who have done rather better are Stephen Boyd in his gore covered BEN HUR finale and SANJURO Mifune's opponent

Nakadai who sprays the scope frame. Vadim even manages to make the image bleed in the dream in BLOOD & ROSES.

For those who are tired of their haemorrhage in Hammer red the animation people are the main source of relief. The Hydra headed dragon in PRINCE BAJAJA, the Jiri Trnka feature bleeds a glossy metalic black and taking the idea to live action one of George Pal's things from outer space contrived to bleed green. Even better is the eight foot spider in Korda's THIEF OF BAGDAD. Slightly before it is precipitated into the pit containing the giant squid which has just consumed its mate, Sabu lops off a couple of the thing's legs which gush a transparent jade green fluid.

Another ingenious variation is based on the picturesque aspect of blood spreading in liquid, the drop that falls into the beer glass in RIO BRAVO for instance. Consequently a high percentage of movie characters have been meeting their ends underwater. The palace guard who bloodies up the swimming pool in Rawlins' 1942 ARABIAN NIGHTS is an early casualty. Rather better is the scene with the Athenian swimming under the Persian ship trying to beat a hole in the bottom in the Tourneur-Bava-Steve Reeves GIANT OF MARATHON. An arrow from the deck catches him in the throat and flecks the cool blue image with red. However my favorite remains the climax of DISTANT DRUMS, possibly the best of Raoul Walsh's westerns. Here Gary Cooper and the chief murdering savage grapple on the river bed under the ripling silver surface. Cooper manages to drive his knife into the other's bare belly (in shot) and swims off as the red stain billows from the body settling on the white sand beneath them. — BARRIE PATTISON

HEART-THROBS, The latest

In Paul Verhoeven's THE COLD HEART (E. Germany), the wicked giant hangs hearts (all gently pulsating) on a heart-rack. In SODOM AND GOMMORAH, Stanley Baker lies transfixed by Stewart Granger's sword, a tiny pool of blood throbbing on his chest. — I. K. J.

HEROISM, Military

Beautiful, if jingoistic images abound, from every film-making country in the world: ALEXANDER NEVSKI, WESTFRONT 1918, THE FOUR FEATHERS, 1860, THE BURMESE HARP, DRUMS ALONG THE MOHAWK. From Ford's film, one of his finest, who can forget — or remember without a shudder — Ward Bond pulling a blazing arrow from his chest, the white women with grim glee pouring boiling water over the Indians who have broken through the wall, the gruelling pursuit by three Indian braves of fleet-footed Henry Fonda in his cross-country run for help, the parson praying, "Oh Lord, you know our ammunition's mighty low . . ." Most moving of all, the scene where a scout, captured as he went for help, is tied by Indians in a

"Fires on the Plain". A hunger-crazed Japanese soldier spies human meat. The obverse of military heroism. "It will come, humanity must perforce prey on itself like monsters of the deep" ("King Lear").

hay cart, to be burned alive in full view of the fort's defenders; as the flames lick up around him he smiles and laughs at his comrades, as if to pretend it's all a huge joke, they mustn't lose heart. A well-aimed bullet puts him out of his agony. But is not Sam Fuller's RUN OF THE ARROW just as near the truth about the American dream?

A more reconciliatory spirit is found in the Indian film JHANSI KI RHANI, a £750,000 Technicolor epic about a patriotic Indian Queen who fought the British during the nineteenth century. The East India Company sends her an ultimatum — and a pair of handcuffs. A ferocious tribesman allied to her snaps them with one contemptuous twist of his fingers, and she tosses them back, together with a cartridge for the Governor-General. The film admits to atrocities committed by half-civilized elements on the Indian side. The redcoats, defeated in open battle, triumph only through the treachery of mercenaries. After we had seen the young and beautiful warrior Queen of Jhansi spiked on British lances and drenching the flanks of her milk-white horse with her blood, every one at the Asian Film Society stood politely up for the National Anthem and Technicolor clips of our Queen, smiling benignly at us from the back of another white horse. It's nice to think old hatreds don't always go on for ever. — R. E. D.

INCINERATION

Into the furnace with 'em. In THE BAD SEED the demure little ten-year-old girl fixes the furnace and locks the handyman in the basement; his dying screams echo up the central heating system, fill the house during four o'clock tea. Ceramicist Arcimboldo de la Crux, foiled by his victim, lugs a wax surrogate by her hair towards his oven. Her leg dislocates, drags off at the thigh, he flings it in after her, she tosses among the flames in erotic, not to say epileptic convulsions, her wax face blisters over and "weeps" and finally her face melts away into a shapeless mass of lava-flesh. In THE MAD MAGICIAN, a gaslit version of GOG (q.v.), mad Vincent Price tries to get Eva Gabor and Mary Murphy into his private crematorium (developing 3,500°). One of the screen's weirdest near-burnings is in Lang's METROPOLIS. The burly bearded foreman hauls the false Maria (Amazonian Brigitte Helm) up onto the pyre, yanks her arms high behind her back, then trusses her to the stake while the Great Unwashed roar applause. She cheats them all by metamorphosing back into the steel android she really is is as flames reach her; but their expectation is unnervingly savage. — R. E. D.

JAPANESE CINEMA, Elan Vital of the

Maybe we should first recall that until the beginning of World War II the least carnal lyricism, the most delicate of kisses on the mouth, were severely proscribed from Nipponese screens. After the defeat, public "morality" was brutally disrupted. Women emancipated themselves into prostitution, peasant women uprooted themselves to move to the towns, occidental customs were superimposed on ancestral traditions. An astonishing cocktail of obsolescent oriental grandeurs and American modernism suddenly ousted a whole expanse of Japanese culture. Out of the collision of two civilisations, in many ways completely antagonistic, contemporary Japan was born.

Promptly women took on a new and considerable importance in the life of the country. Her social and economic role became prominent as a result of the profound shake-ups of the war; she gained a certain liberty. It is no longer rare to come across women sitting by themselves in cinemas, which would have been unthinkable as little as 20 years ago. As in the U.S.A., nearly 60% of the Japanese public consists of the "distaff side". This was bound to entail a modification of the habitual cinematic themes, which focused increasingly on women. This amounted to a revolution in **mores** for at the Kabuki theatre all roles continued to be played by men. Japan must be counted among the three dominant film-producing nations in the world, alongside India and the U.S.A. In 1961, she surpassed American production, less, however, because of her own growth than because of the crisis undergone by her rival.

What sort of films does she produce? what are their themes? Her films were wrapped in mystery for us until they burst in on us at the European festivals. We thought we had the answer. It seemed inevitable that tales of stout-hearted Samurai should provide the basis of the Japanese cinema, quite natural that socially significant films should centre on atomic questions. There was no hint or presage of anything ulterior, except for a certain violence of gesture which, when one came to think of it, did eloquently suggest a certain tenour of human relationships. From RASHOMON (1950) we caught a glimpse of the man-woman relationships, as implied by Kurosawa's amazing story of a rape, in which the real and the imaginary were intimately intertwined. The accounts offered by the victim, her assailant, and by the humiliated husband continually clashed, and led us little by little into an erotic-oniristic delirium, inspired by the surging tides of passionate desire.

There then followed the beautiful and monotonous procession of such films as GATE OF HELL (Kinugasa, '53), THE LIFE OF O'HARU (Mizoguchi) and THE TALE OF GENJI (Yoshimura, '52) — occasionally interspersed with such dazzling films as THE SEVEN SAMURAI (Kurosawa).

We sank slowly into a morass of beatific admiration, excited by exoticism, hardly realising that the Japanese were constructing these films, deliberately, calculatingly, inserting all the ingredients necessary to tickle Western palates. But the revelation of Mizoguchi's other films was soon to unveil one of the little known aspects of the authentic Nipponese cinema. A purely oriental dimension determines the very existence of this director's personages, whether they move in the heart of traditional Japanese civilisation or among contemporary prostitutes.

Then came BEAUTY AND THE BANDIT, by K. Kimura (1952), the antithesis of all we had so far seen. The intensely erotic content of this film was even more powerful by contrast with a universe which, to gratify our tastes, had been embalmed in the formalist, ceremonial dignity. The striptease of Machiko Kyo, hitherto seen only in the historical subjects, the demential couplings of an old man and

a young woman, the exacerbated atmosphere reigning throughout the film, directed a renewed curiosity towards the land of the Rising Sun. So there were other categories of film, apart from the sabre films and the realistic dramas, categories which were carefully hidden from us. A handful of science-fiction subjects hardly sharpened our impatience. Though occasionally rich in ideas, they were poor in style, and aroused little feeling. Today it seems evident that we will never see in Europe the **fifty per cent** of Japanese films which are **entirely sadistic** in their appeal.

Woman, more or less liberated from the traditional constraints of her ancient lot, found herself in a more favourable position vis-a-vis man. Moreover newcomers to a privilege always have an advantage over those who have long been in possession of it. Novelty spurs existing desires and arouses others. One would expect a sharp counter-reaction, and the cinema provided the means. A torrent of erotic films descended on Japan around the '50s, a torrent which has not diminished with the passage of time. They are called "Nedokos", or "alcove films", although there is nothing clandestine about their showing.

Japanese cinemas currently favour the double feature, as a means of absorbing the enormous national production. It is not uncommon to see a classic story of brigands bracketed with a film which is a simple pretext for all the excesses of a virulent sadism — or sometimes even a programme consisting of two films both of the latter variety. The themes, quite varied, exist only to afford opportunities for the carnal activities of the characters and to accomodate a few scenes of exceptionally refined torture.

I have, unfortunately, not been able to see any of the films which I now propose to describe, and for these details I am indebted to a friend who has just returned from Japan. The photographs illustrating this article are extracted from widely circulated magazines which, after the Western fashion, retail scenes from current successes. Only the subjects differ. There are over a dozen film magazines in Japan, of which the majority seem devoted to sado-masochistic iconography. Scabrous scenes from the world's productions are lovingly reproduced, mingled with shots from local productions. Unfortunately, although in the majority of cases the stills are accompanied by the film's title, the names of director and actor are regularly omitted, and I am consequently unable to furnish them here.

Let us first distinguish two categories:

— first, those films which elaborate on woman's physical existence, considering her simply as an object destined to furnish exorbitant satisfactions to the male;

— on the other hand, those which demand sex equality in the matter of erotic pain, since Japanese feminism also demands the right to derive pleasure from inflicting tortures on the male.

Each category can in its turn be subdivided into four genres:—

— classical-historic;
— classical-supernatural;
— modern detective-thriller;
— modern socio-psychological drama.

As an example of the **classical-historic** style, here is the plot of GEISHA HARUKOMA. The Togukawa Samurai, in rebellion against the authority of the Emperor, have already occupied part of his domain. A young Geisha is caught sheltering a spy from ill-treatment by the invaders. The Samurai seize the guilty woman and the cruel games begin. The unfortunate woman is, successively, strung up by her feet, smoked, flogged, then tied naked to a tree and used as a target to test the skill of her tormentors. **In extremis** she is saved by her fiancé, Captain of the Imperial Guard. THE LAWS OF SATAN'S CASTLE typifies the **classical-supernatural** category introducing us to a Shinto sacrificial ritual conducted by a priestess of the cult. A man is hung over a glowing brazier, and little by little consumed by the flames of Hell, under the complaisant eyes of an assembly of men and women. The astonishing beauty of this image, a masterpiece of composition, sharpens our regret at the unavailability of this film.

Thrillers have recourse to the inexhaustible fund of melodrama, and to themes of legal error. SHUO HAN KAN (The Judge) is based on the very elaborate "interrogation" of a delinquent girl. SHADOWS IN DAYLIGHT, directed by Tadash Imai, which has been shown in Paris, gives a pretty accurate idea of the methods employed by the Japanese police to wring confessions from their suspects. The tragic fate of five young people accused of a murder is recounted in detail, from the legal torturing to the final condemnation. On account of its particular nature, this category of film has only remote connections with eroticism. It is more a matter of **violence,** in the crudest sense of the term, than of consciously refined sadism. Another example, relevant here despite its narrative context, WITH THE WOMEN CONVICTS, concerns a slightly deranged thief who performs striptease in her cell so as to amuse and **satisfy** some of her companions. Many of these films manifest a streak of sadistic Sapphism. The theme of the lady painter who flagellates her semi-naked models is one of the most popular in this category.

There is an equal variety of themes on which the **socio-psychological drama** may embroider. Prominent among them are films centring on bad lads who force poor girls, fresh from the backwoods, to drug and prostitute themselves under the threat of abundant but meticulous tortures. Since sooner or later they become recalcitrant, whether through disgust or remorse, according to the taste of the scenarist, the threats finally materialise, to the delight of the spectator. OKINU OTAMA (WOMEN OF THE NIGHT STORM) details the torturings of a reluctant prostitute who is suspended, head downwards, naked, and between whose breasts molten wax is poured. THE PUNISHMENT CHAMBER is the flagship of a category which could hardly have existed without it.

The after-effects of war, and conjugal jealousy, are the two themes oddly combined in IMASHIME (WORD PLAY). The melodramatic scenario runs thus. Returning to Japan after the war against China, the hero is informed by his doctor that he will be unable to have children because of a venereal disease acquired in the course of his travels. Time passes.

With The Women Convicts

Imashime (Word Play)

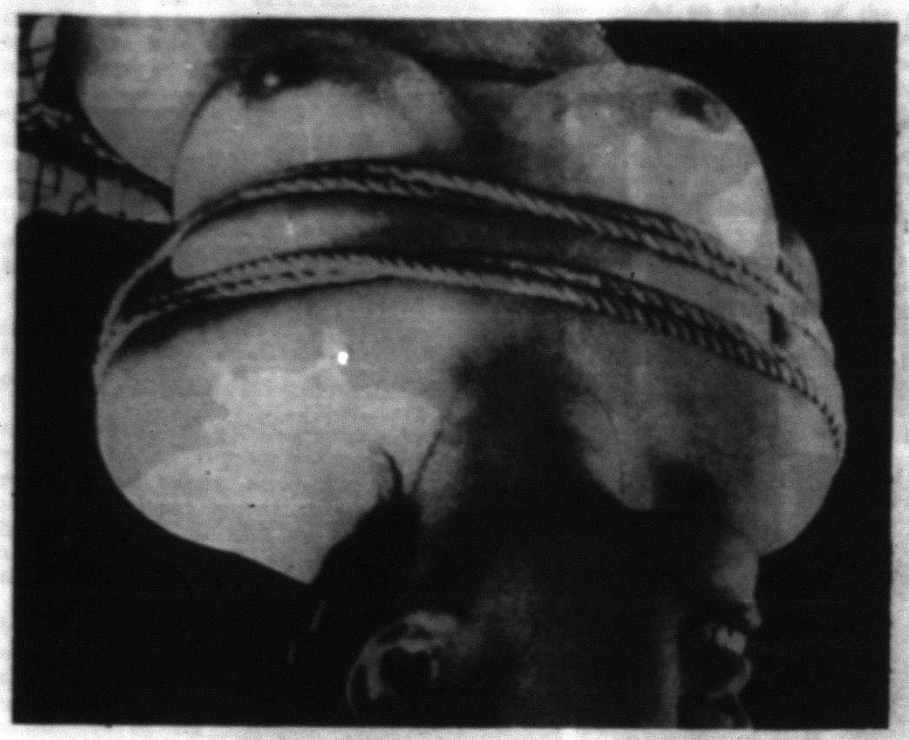
The Laws Of Satan's Castle

The Punishment Chamber

One day he discovers that his wife is pregnant by a young student. The remembrance of the pleasure he derived from torturing Chinese prisoners incites him to a few more effusions of the same variety. He trusses his wife up in an extremely uncomfortable position, for a whole night, exposed to the eyes of the passers-by. Next day, filled with joy at having satisfied his sadistic tendencies, he confesses his activities to a friend, who advises him to renew the activity with greater regularity henceforth. Which he proceeds to do, with a rare diligence. On the slenderest excuse he suspends the guilty woman, first from the ceiling, then from the high-voltage electrical apparatus in his workshop, where she finally meets a violent death, during an electricity cut.

A few short films like PROGRAMME OF A QUEEN'S DAY initiate us into the behaviour of Japanese masochists. The lover of humiliation must awaken his mistress in the mornings by licking the soles of her feet, which puts her into a charming mood for dealing with him. He functions as a washstand during her ablutions, is severily whipped if he upsets the toothbrush glass which she has placed on his back, and finished by obeying all the caprices of his idol, like a well-trained performing dog.

These examples give some idea of the authentic



Okinu Otama (Women of the Night Storm)

Japanese popular cinema. Such is their popularity that Mizoguchi himself had to make concessions to the genre, about 1950, with YIKI FUJIN (MADAME YUKI), which dealt with a wife who is abandoned by her husband and then morally and physically humiliated by the introduction of another woman into the conjugal home. Naturally, thanks to his exceptional talent, the director mitigated the crudity of the subject by substituting the schema of his personal vision of the universe; but perhaps it is a a pity that Mizoguchi did not really abide by the rules of the game; we would have had the great erotic film of the Oriental cinema.

Be this as it may one cannot but regret the absence of similar productions from our own screens. Japan offers us the example of a people who have learnt to dominate the deep undercurrents of the soul and who, despite the social and economic restraints which are often the source of their overplus of sexual energy, are in the process of triumphing in the struggle to exorcise some of the phantasms harmful to the future emancipation of mankind.

The challenge which Sade hurled at society will, of course, remain unparallelled until the end of time. The fascination with erotic sacrifice, with which he confronted the world, is far too subversive to be accepted without a violent reaction. Nonetheless, whenever people succeed in setting aside moral and religious tabus, or the biological menaces dispensed by the guardians of reactionary orders, so that there are no additional limitations to the natural behaviour of man, then there is still hope.

The hope is the development of an integral man; who will dominate Nature by submitting himself to the essential passions which rule her and which run at tangents to his own aspirations. The future course of our intellectual and physical culture depends on this sacrifice. The gigantic work of subversion performed by a Sadistic cinema can only facilitate our task.

It is a good thing that the masses should observe the corrosion and decay of all that still thwarts the redoubtable pressure of their wishes. — ALAIN JOUBERT

(Translated from PRESENCE DU CINEMA Nos. 6/7, Dec. 1960: "Numéro Special: Sadisme et Libertinage")

(Editorial Footnote: Another description of BEAUTY AND THE BANDIT may be found in "Oriental Notebook" in "Sight and Sound" for Oct.-Dec. 1954, where we postulated affinities between Japanese erotic violence and the work of Dreyer and von Sternberg.

We might also remark that Unijapan refused to provide MOTION with any stills or documentation concerning the films mentioned in Mr. Joubert's article, and others. However, it will be seen that one of the stills appended is from a Unijapan publicity brochure.

It is worth remembering also that Hammer Films produce "gentle" versions of their horror films for Great Britain, grimmer versions for the rest of the world, and super-de-luxe versions for Japan.

Readers may be interested in one or two asides from "Understanding the Japanese Character", by James Clark Maloney (Philosophical Library, U.S.A.,

1954). "In ... Greater Tokyo, in 1928 apoplexy accounted for 9.4% of the deaths, this is the highest figure of all the metropolises of the world. Moreover, the figure is increasing... (these figures) are important because the constant polite repression of temper can cause high blood-pressure. And the Japanese are the most polite nation in the world... The average Japanese adult is incapable of a spontaneous retaliatory hostility... If the (Japanese) boy becomes annoyed or angry, he is not permitted to discharge this rage in the direction of his father, the emperor, or... bureaucracy; but he may, as an alternative, legitimately pound his mother's breasts.." John Embree, in "Suye Mura: a Japanese Village" (University of Chicago Press, 1939), describes how a Japanese conscript is greeted on returning to his village. "The women of his **buraku** dress up in outlandish costumes, often as soldiers or tramps, and meet the returning procession by the bridge in the next **mura**. The women make obscene jokes as if they were men, try to rape the young schoolgirls, and in general cause bursts of laughter and gaiety." It should perhaps be remembered that Japanese wartime atrocities did not surpass those of the Chinese, whose films are relatively un-violent. According to Lily Abegg in "The Mind of East Asia" (Thames and Hudson, 1952), "there were in the summer of 1945 in all China... only three living Japanese prisoners of war to be registered... near Peking two hundred Japanese, including many women and children, were shot and beheaded without any apparent reason, after they had been fastened to one another by wires drawn through the nose... A Chinese prison is an institution from which not many emerge alive... in Peking I had to witness how an elderly man at the point of death, whose mouth was already flecked with foam, lay on the ground in violent convulsions, while the Chinese standing around shook with laughter at his every movement..."

Dr. Moloney's book is particularly useful in approaching the Japanese cinema, for, though its psycho-analytical terms may prove a barrier, it does provide useful clues to emotional assumptions which are taken for granted by Japanese audiences but whose existence few Europeans even suspect. His book also describes many of the **positive**, if strange, features of the Japanese character, and does seem to suggest that Mr. Joubert's last remarks, however shocking they may seem to some of our readers, are very far from being without substance.).

LANG, Fritz

Like many before me, I asked Fritz Lang why there was so much and such extreme violence in his work. The reason he gives is an interesting rationalisation from a director well enough established not to need a layer of box-office sensationalism over his work. Lang feels that the people of his time have lost their fear of damnation. The only fear now is pain, and the source of pain is violence.

Looking at Lang's own films it is the violent passages that stand out — Siegfried slashing open the dragon's eye, Spencer Tracy in FURY telling his brothers of the lynching, "I could smell myself burn". In WESTERN UNION, Chil Wills' blood dripping on the yellow earth is followed by the magnificent hand to hand struggles between Dennis O'keefe and Alexander Granach in HANGMEN ALSO DIE and particularly between Gary Cooper and Marc Lawrence in CLOAK & DAGGGER with an unmatched variety of eye gouging and kicking while they're down. From BLUE GARDENIA onwards these scenes, especially those of assaults on women, seem to become obsessive. There are the scauldings and cigarette burnings of THE BIG HEAT, Joan Greenwood's muffled cries coming from the upturned coach in MOONFLEET or the rape scenes of WHILE THE CITY SLEEPS or RANCHO NOTORIOUS where Lang's credit comes up in sync. with the words of the Chuckaluck balade refrain "Hate, murder and revenge".

Kyuju kyuhonme no kimusume

(The Blood Sword of the 99th Virgin — Uni-Japan)

Fritz Lang is sure to earn a place in anyone's index of movie sadism and it is with a certain pleasure we notice he is still defending it in TIGRESS OF BENGAL with the chopped up retainer falling in front of the camera to reveal Paul Christian in regulation uniform — blood stained, shirt, scimitar and dancing girl. — BARRIE PATTISON

LEATHER

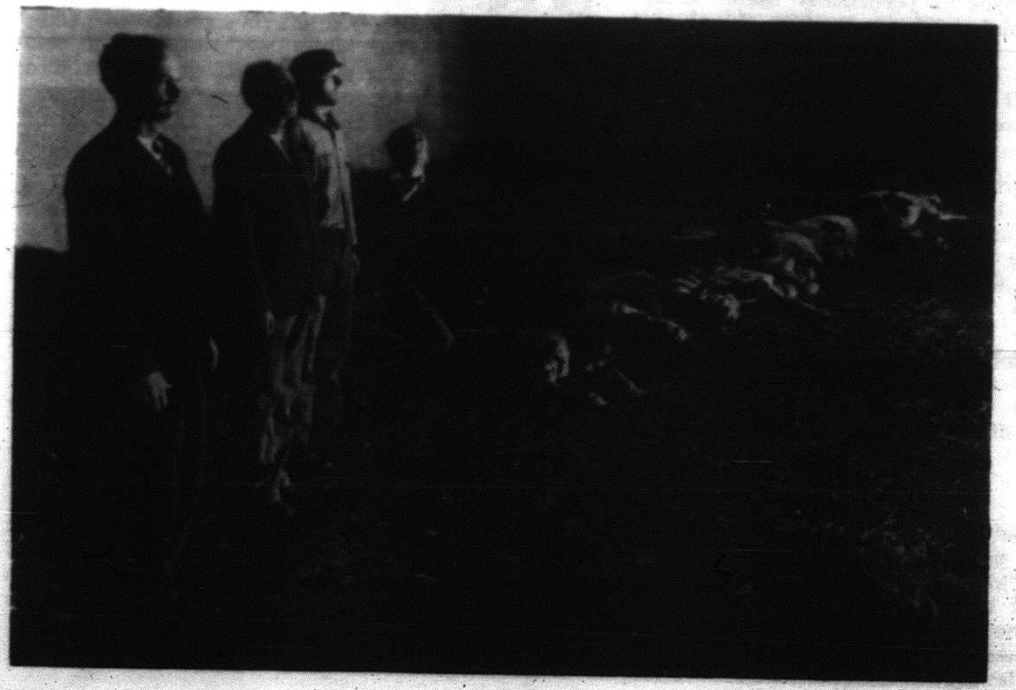
As leather tags are in fashion this year it's fun to recall that leather is a standard masochist's fetish, has a traditional association with power, acquired a more recent one with the jacket shells of sullen independence into which our James Deans withdraw from a confusing world, and, since THE WILD ONE, also carries a more specific, and generally understood, meaning as sadist's garb. Dirk Bogarde wears leather trousers to symbolise unselfishly passionate evil in THE SINGER NOT THE SONG. In ON FRIDAY AT ELEVEN Nadja Tiller wears leather trousers for a hold-up in which she pistol-whips a gentleman old enough to be her father. In THE MILLIONAIRESS Sophia Loren as Shaw's Superwoman, after judo-ing her husband all round the connubial mansion, dons a smoke-blue leather suit to browbeat sweetshop boss Vittorio de Sica into automating his business. In STRANGER ON HORSEBACK (a disturbing little Jacques Tourneur Western) Joel McCrea comes up against Miroslava (ex-Arcimboldo), who is clad throughout in black leather boots, gloves, and, of course, whip. She comes across him bathing naked in a pool — and though the sequence is censored it looks as if it builds up to a converse of the scene in DUEL IN THE SUN, where Gregory Peck waits for Jennifer Jones to emerge from among the reeds, where she is cowering and shivering. The film also has a moment of Hawksian moral sadism: the weak-willed sheriff finally accepts the necessity for violence and blasts away at the crooks with a Winchester .73. "How d'you like it?" asks Joel McCrea: "Loathsome" replies the sheriff, grinning broadly. In LE QUATRIEME SEXE leather-trousered tomboy Brigitte Juslin discovers tenderness only after all her judo tricks prove unavailing against Richard Winckler. Before the morbid puritans conclude that if leather knee-boots are in fashion it's all because we're more wicked than ever (if that's possible), let's remember that much smartness depends on scandal (i.e. audacity), that fashions are traditionally set as much by the wicked heroines as by the virtuous ones, and that the general public often adopts the fashion as such and ignores the original "meaning". Maybe leather rig still has overtones of sex equality and of a nostalgic assertion of tough independence vis-a-vis gray flannel. Fashion also seems to evolve by a dialectic of sharp minor evolutions within a more gradual evolution, leather being a kind of "skin anti-skin" is the antithesis to the bikinis-and-bareness of the '50's. Display of the flesh is replaced by a thick, sleek carapace hiding and implying the flesh. (According to this theory the current turn of fashion's wheel is towards bright colours and opulently feminine texture). — R. E. D.

LIVING IDOL, The

Films have evolved a visual shorthand: Life is suggested by the face upright, sleep by a side shot, and death by the face inverted as at the opening of Welles' OTHELLO. Albert Lewin's THE LIVING IDOL (1956), transfers this idea to an inanimate object, and to suggest an idol has been shorn of its malignant power has the idol upturned.

LUALDI, Antonella

In MEFIEZ-VOUS FILLETTES she is kidnapped by gangsters, raped, vomits lengthily. In THE MONGOLS she is bullwhipped across the bosom by Anita Ekberg. In NOTTE BRAVA she is tricked and humiliated by



Fritz Lang and the geometry of violence: "Hangmen Also Die" (1942).

Too beautiful to live: Antonella Lualdi in "A Double Tour".

Laurent Terzieff's circus of pimps and queers. In J'IRAI CRACHER SUR VOS TOMBES she is half-choked by Christian Marquand. In A DOUBLE TOUR she is strangled by mother's darling André Josslyn. This sumptuous animal is one of the born victims of the cinema, in the Fay Wray tradition. The vigour of her screaming advertises a magnificent pair of lungs, the stripping-and-whipping scenes display her muscularity, her writhing is a form of resilience. Like other torturees (Pearl White) the secret of her style is an inner exuberance, although she belongs to the school of savage animals rather than wilful, almost Victorian good girls (Lilian Gish, Lee Remick). Occasionally she holds the whiphand — in ADORABLES CREATURES, where she stuns fatherly Daniel Gelin into matrimony by bombarding him with everything creamic within reach. In Autant-Lara's LE ROUGE ET LE NOIR she survived the directorial soft-pedal and hinted at the romantic violence which inspired Stendhal's Mathilde to bury her lover's guillotined head with her own fair lily-whites. She has the vehemence of La Lollo and the tough felinity of Dirk Bogarde. The long lean sensuality of her face, when garnished with an appropriate coiffure, can acquire a demure Madonna oval, in which the flash of her dark eyes is doubly disconcerting. According to Ado Kyrou she was sublime as the passionate ingenue of A CHRONICLE OF POOR LOVERS. In default of better parts, here's to the next time she gets put through the mangle. — R. E. D.

MACHINE-GUN, Cult of the

The numerous patterns of conflict implicit in the invention of the machine gun have proved a gift to the cinema. No other weapon has shown quite the same capacity for visual and psychological impact, or can express as much simultaneous egoism, omnipotence, cruelty, and virility. The machine gun puts the power of instant mass execution into the arms of its possessor, as a result of which it often obscures him altogether and takes on a life of its own. Beside its snub, snug, self-contained, self-satisfied, voracious bulk, disgorging repetitively the maxim that what the enemy dislikes once he'll loathe ad infinitum, all other hand weapons look puny and all other field firearms seem ponderous. Even with an inexpert finger upon the trigger, the machine gun habit of spraying bullets like water from a hose cools the ardour of all comers, and performs the task with an incomparable efficiency, glee, and totalitarianism.

Time and again, possession of the machine gun indicates who is winning in any film struggle. So invincible is the impression the weapon conveys that directors find its symbolic use irresistible and few villain-heroes on the screen have met their deserts while wielding one. Those who have are usually slightly insane, like Stanley Baker in A HILL IN KOREA, who charges the enemy singlehanded, or Gerard Blain in HUNCHBACK OF ROME, whose weird emancipation plan for prostitutes is followed by a hopeless getaway attempt. These people have made their own death so inevitable, that **not even** a machine gun can protect them, and their hopelessness is emphasised by the presence of the weapon beside their bodies. The machine gun is the status-symbol of the successful slaughterer, and the support and enforcement of the forward march of many a little Caesar. The most obligatory sequence in any American gangster film dealing with the Prohibition era, apart from the bit when a black sedan rounds the street corner with a screech of tyres and a

Partisan femininity: "Zaduszki" ("All Saints' Day").

barrage of gunfire, is the shot of the central character at the peak of his career, his gun blazing, while a succession of his Press notices, headlines, and other rhubarb, is superimposed across the screen.

That this conventional insertion is regarded as a key moment in a gangster's filmic rise and fall is shown by its appearance in Boetticher's LEGS DIAMOND, when it is the only sequence in which Ray Danton opeartes a machine gun. Prior and subsequent to this point he favours the two-gun technique of a Boetticher "B" Western hero, killing off the opposition with an amiable delicacy in keeping with his taste for natty clothes and ballroom dancing. He learns sharpshooting by the time-honoured practice of loosing off at tin cans, after which he neatly drills two enemies in the street in an encounter worthy of Wyatt Earp. Later he goes alone after the man who shot his brother, nudges him out of a hotel window and picks off his two henchmen in the street below with a precision rifle and a contented smile. Thus is established that Diamond is a killer with class; not for him the scarred face, the ambush in the birthday cake, the St. Valentine's Day farrago. Even when he once uses a hand grenade, he bounces it gently down a flight of steps under the startled eyes of its prospectve victims, so that we all get a good laugh before the big bang. So the machine gun only makes its appearance to cover the flourishing days of Diamond's syndicate at its most destructive, and to prepare the audience, as in SCARFACE, AL CAPONE, HUNCHBACK OF ROME and many others, for the second half of the story, in which, against insuperable odds, crime will finally turn out not to pay.

The orgasmic nature of the machine gun burst at the film climax of a gangster career significantly enhances its militant potency, which, once expressed, gives way to the relaxation and lethargy subconsciously to be expected. The crook gets overconfident and careless, the death-wish gets stronger (Legs Diamond goes so far as to invite death by claiming no bullet can kill him), and the woman he has constantly maltreated in a manner consistent with his rape of social order abandons him or turns against him. In SCARFACE she is killed and Paul Muni clutches at her body like a lost child; in LEGS DIAMOND she walks out while he is asleep, taking his guns with her, and hands the doorkey to his enemies — so that with Freudian irony he wakes defenceless to find not a woman but retribution at his bedside. From Euripides to Shakespeare, this basic dramatic sexual pattern is recurrent, and the cult of the machine gun updates it perfectly by being appropriate to every kind of self-expression by individuals. For apart from the electric guitar, a peacetime weapon which has basically sexual connotations to its popularity, the only other genuine virility symbol of today is the atomic bomb, which is nationalist in expression and consequently less individually satisfying. The bomb did indeed, as pointed out in the biased but fascinating British Lion documentary SUICIDE PILOTS, fulfill the medieval death-wish of the Japanese war machine, and it is logical to find Antonioni in THE ECLIPSE using the mushroom shape both as an omnipresent warning of disaster and as a rampant phallic symbol. But like the militarists and the optimists always say, the bomb can never entirely replace good old expendable close-quarters manpower, for the phallic frustration of the atomic bomb is that it destroys completely its essential friend the enemy and removes its own raison d'être for a couple of thousand years. No such complications with the machine gun, which limits the survival contest to the fairly traditional form of one superman versus another in a duel to the death, and leaves behind plenty of over-population to carry on the good work.

For the film-maker, who has to combine warfare with box-office considerations and aesthetic visual impact, the machine gun is the grim basic theme upon which he can wreak an infinite number of happy variations. Machine guns are littered with abandon, for instance, throughout THE LONGEST DAY, in which everybody but the top brass, who are thereby more easily identifiable, seems to have been issued with them for the Normandy landings. As a mild concession to the British Army's quaint policy of retaining as many as possible of its World War One .303s for reissue twenty years later, the lower ranks (impersonated by Norman Rossington and Sean Connery) are equipped with a Bren, but the genuine, unglamorous, rifles which have been slowly fading from British war films for the past five years, here seem finally to have become extinct. We saw them in THE LONG, THE SHORT, AND THE TALL, there were some around in YESTERDAY'S ENEMY, and as a sop to authenticity they appear in the co-production STORY OF PRIVATE POOLEY. Interestingly, in each of these films the rifle-prone British protagonists get themselves wiped out, and in the case of POOLEY, as it was in fact, machine guns do the killing.

The same formula is evident in Ichikawa's FIRES ON THE PLAIN, in which the defeated Japanese soldiers carry ineffectual rifles, and are slaughtered by the hundred in the sequence when they try to cross an American-held road; similar mass destruction by superior gun-power occurs in HILL IN KOREA when only four men eradiate an entire enemy company. And so when Richard Todd and his men glide in on their eventually victorious attack on a bridge in THE LONGEST DAY, they blast away with an array of Stens because plain rifles would look suicidal; and as the first part of the operation is successful a jubilant closeup of Richard Todd has him clapping a fresh magazine into his gun so that we can look forward optimistically to a noisy sequel. THE LONGEST DAY even extracts some irony from the use of a rifle, when Sal Mineo is polished off for failing to recognise the sound of a bolt being worked; presumably, being accustomed to a repeating rifle, he didn't hear it so often, and in this film it is certainly not the sort of noise he could expect. The Germans may be on the losing side, but as an indication of the odds in their favour their machine gun nests are (almost) impregnably thick on the ground.

At its most impersonally vicious the battleground machine gun arouses a form of hysteria among both soldiers and film directors. The best examples of these two aspects are perhaps ALL QUIET ON THE WESTERN FRONT and the Gallipoli landing in TELL ENGLAND. Milestone tracks very fast along the line of soldiers flinging themselves into the hail of bullets in an orgy of self-destruction, and the result is a reaction of horrified excitement — feelings appropriate to the two armies, the audience, and the director himself. A sense of desperation is apparent in Asquith's slightly more detached conflict; an impossible top-level order begins the scene and a pompous patriotic comment ends it, and sandwiched between these two empty aphorisms is their result, the intolerable reality itself. Here Asquith's excitement is conveyed by the staccato cutting which has a visual rhythm to match the chatter of the enemy guns. After looking down their sights to reveal the hopeless position of their advancing victims, he places the camera in front of the machine guns as they fire, a disconcerting switch for the audience, which at once feels vulnerable. The intercutting between these closeups of the blasting muzzle and the shots of dying men thus gives the scene an undercurrent of panic, which mounts until almost with a sense of relief the audience is shown there are no more men left to kill. The pattern is of course derived from Eisenstein's Odessa steps sequence, with the added refinement of an insistent racket on the soundtrack (so menacing is the sound alone of the machine gun that on occasion, as in CAPORAL ÉPINGLÉ, directors don't even need a corpse to show a death). The blazing closeup was the best thing in SNOWS OF KILIMANJARO, while the defenceless victims theme comes over well in THE LAST GOAL, KAPO and VIVA ZAPATA, in which, apart from the sequence when a machine gun fires upon smartly retreating peasantry. Brando meets his death in an equivalent rain of bullets which raises the traditional cloud of dust about his feet.

That cloud of dust is one of the secrets behind the cult of the machine gun. Its easy implications of violence and its spectacular appearance combine to agitate the adrenalin glands of the two-and-sixes in a twink. Instances of the use of this gimmick are legion. Notice how the ground gets furrowed irrelevently in PIGEON THAT TOOK ROME in an abortive attempt to ginger up the last moments of the film. Notice how a machine gun is the entire armoury of Yul Brynner's merry band in ESCAPE FROM ZAHRAIN, so that for novelty's sake Sal Mineo gets peppered with bullets from an aeroplane and they have to wind up throwing Molotov cocktails. Notice how bullets are sprayed across the front of the hotel in THOUSAND EYES OF DR. MABUSE in the shoot-up-cum-car-chase straight out of an old gangster film. Notice how Lilli Palmer is wastefully mown down in COUNTERFEIT TRAITOR, and Albert Remy rather more exotically in FOUR HORSEMEN. In each case it is the abandon with which the supposed bullets are flung around, as shown by their arrival on the adjoining scenery, which makes at the same time the more total and the more picturesque (i.e. simultaneously horrible and enjoyable) the destruction of their victims. In

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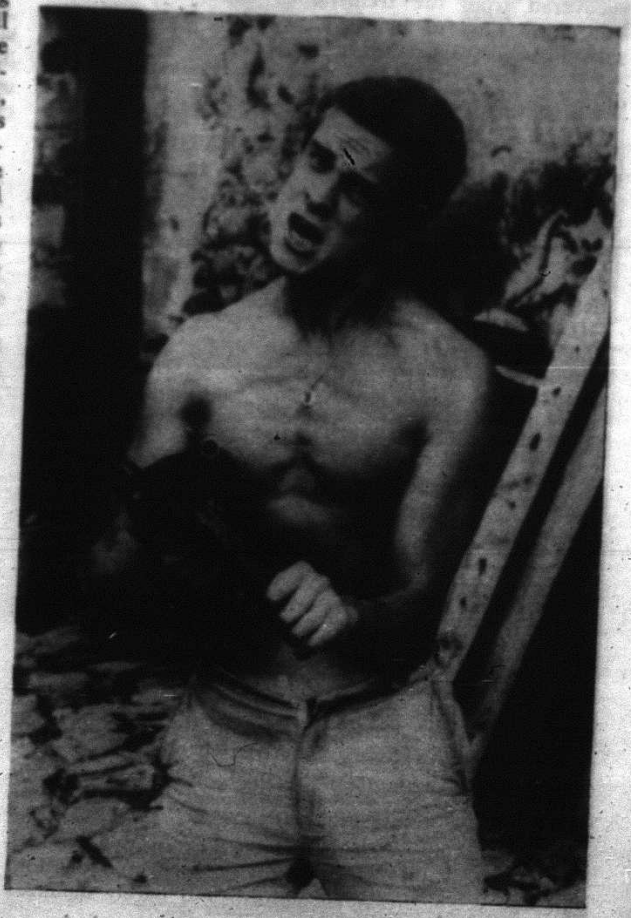
Teddy-Boy Virility: "Les Loups Dans la Bergerie" ("The Damned and the Daring").



CONCERTO FOR A SUB MACHINE GUN much of the ghoulish humour of the cartoon is dependent upon the readiness of its audience to get kicks out of pitched gun battles in which bullets literally cross off the gangsters one by one. This is just the smallest of steps from the pleasingly horrible scenes in feature films when bullets plough their way through human flesh — the sort of shot Wajda makes a meal out of in KANAL and ASHES AND DIAMONDS. The satisfaction combined with conscientious disgust which such moments afford makes for healthy escapism in the well ordered life, and also makes a packet for such archpsychoanalysts as Robert Bloch, whose horror stories maintain a precise balance between the revolting and the sublime.

Undeniably the Poles are the best handlers of the machine gun on film in the world, and their influence on its use in the cinema has been immense. As long ago as Aleksander Ford's THAT OTHERS MAY LIVE, in which a pre-Munk hero in the Warsaw ghetto makes his way to the roof of a burning building and does a last stand there with a machine gun barrage, the heroes of Polish films were deriving extra stature from the weapon which for many had been a vital limb during the Occupation. Then Wajda produced Cybulski, and machine guns, beat jackets, and dark glasses indoors became simultaneously established for top rebels. The Polish film industry hasn't yet properly recovered from the tremendous impact of this one film. In a kind of hypnotic fascination Wajda's film school successors came up with derivative gems like ANSWER TO VIOLENCE (the assassination scene is still one of the best things in Polish cinema since ASHES AND DIAMONDS), THE WHITE BEAR, the opening of which evokes A GENERATION, and the claustrophobic THE PAST. Even during the expansion in ideas of the last couple of years, which have ranged from the circus sentimentality of THE IMPOSSIBLE FAREWELL to the complex simplicity of SEE YOU TOMORROW, VISIT FROM THE PRESIDENT, and Polanski's admirable KNIFE IN THE WATER, the Poles have maintained an almost obligatory quota of films concerned with warfare and its mental aftermath.

The most typical of these recent efforts is perhaps TERROR IN THE MOUNTAINS, an extravagant display of violence for its own sake, without even a pretence of characterisation to lift it above the basic level of Polish horse-opera. The film is remarkable for the blatant enjoyment with which it presents a long series of well-staged brutalities taking place against a political background so involved as to confuse even the most ardent students of Polish history. The year is 1945, the setting is the Ukraine, the hero is an insignificantly handsome footsoldier of incredible stamina, fortitude, and lack of imagination. He is a member of the Communist-supported Polish People's Army and is up to his neck in trouble, fighting fascist guerrilla bands, the Polish underground, and his own men, who suspect him of treason every time he returns to them after getting lost. At one point they string him from the roof by his ankles, where he swings gently (no faking, either) during the subsequent interrogation. Later he is caught in an ambush and barely manages to escape the beheading which is noisily administered to his fellow-prisoners in a gruesome firelit sequence of near-erotic executions (sweating close-ups, torn shirts, trembling hands, etc.), and as a postscript to a scene in which he has apparently died of exhaustion in a snowstorm, he gets conclusively shot dead by trigger-happy members of (again) his own group.

The enjoyment to be extracted from TERROR IN THE MOUNTAINS has little to do with the rape of Poland during the war, any more than DR. NO is a serious explanation of American rocket failures. Its hero's resemblance to James Bond does not extend as far as intelligence or evident sexual resourcefulness, but his endurance in a murderous environment is of very similar mettle, and the directors (Eva and Czeslaw Petelski) have Ian Fleming's taste for the sadistic. In their hands the suspense screwed out of the scene where soldiers trapped on a minefield are blown up one by one beats anything, and the list is long, done in this line before. In their hands the machine gun is put through its paces with almost exhaustive thoroughness; there is a vicious running fight beside a burning jeep; bullets rake the walls of a defended house, shatter the inevitable mirror (see also among countless examples, Wajda's LOTNA), and rip up the woodwork (see also among countless examples, Munk's EROICA); and as the hero sinks dying down the door through which he has been shot, a row of bullet-holes hammers through the planks just above his head, a final gesture of pcturesque futility. This exuberance in the cinematic use of the machine gun is directly attributable to the Wajda example, and Cybulski's snarl-cum-smile as he casually totes the weapon around in one hand owes much in turn to Freud, Westerns, and Machine-Gun Kelly.

This is not to say that the cult of the machine gun is all fun and exhibitionism, or that the cascade of shattering bottles in films of such diverse origin as HUNCHBACK OF ROME and PEACE TO THE NEWCOMER entirely explains its fascination. The Steve McQueen character in HELL IS FOR HEROES sports a machine gun not just for the glamour of it, although some narcissism is certainly involved, but legitimately for pugnacious self-protection. As psychologically dependent upon warfare as John Saxon in WAR HUNT, he handles the weapon with something approaching love; it is the first thing he reaches for when the Germans attack, and when they have been repulsed the first thing he does is reload it. It is so much a part of his existence as a soldier that it seems to grow on him, even though his hand-to-hand fracas proves an instinctive ability to kill anybody with anything. In this bitterly realistic type of war film warfare seems personified by the opposition between weapons themselves, clinging like parasites to the anonymous host-bodies of uniformed men. In THE UNKNOWN SOLDIER, one of the best reconstructions of fighting conditions ever made, the total reliance of the protagonists upon their firearms dominates their every action; the anguished blankness of their faces, an image one associates with authentic war photographs, gives the appearance of zombies to whom death (as in the scene when a wounded soldier drags himself into a suicidal embrace with his rifle) comes as a welcome release. Here the machine gun has a malignant in-

dependence, not as a life-saver but as a soul-destroyer, and the corpses which it flings into the mud have nothing of the Western or gangster film excitement about them. They are a reminder that the cult has made what was "glorious" in the nineteenth century into a dirty and impersonal population-decimator in the twentieth.

An unpleasant but opportune reminder. To have one's guilt-complex and enjoy it too is an unhealthy piece of self-deception prone to leading one too easily to a renewal of the original guilt. Like, if we enjoy war films too much we, the restless inactive younger generation, might take up warfare under the impression that machine gun law is good for laughs, despite such lessons in aftermath as the too-harshly judged Polish film ALL SAINTS' DAY. Broodingly made by Tadeusz Konwicki (writer-director of the war-haunted LAST DAY OF SUMMER), this fascinating combination of Antonioni and Marguerite Duras in a Polish ethos shows a man and woman so obsessed with the past that they can rake up little enthusiasm about the present. In a series of flashbacks we see them in action during the Occupation; the man falls for a girl lieutenant only to see her meet an unnecessary but heroic death; the woman defends herself with a machine gun in the attic of her own house, shooting down one after another the men sent up a ladder to get her, but for all the good it does her later love life she might just as well have given herself up then and there. Only by laying the ghost of the machine gun, as it were, can these two people reach some sort of integration with post-war existence. Yet how dull would be the film, and the cinema without the machine gun itself. This masochistic paradox seems insolvable. — PHILIP STRICK

MISSILES, Guided

at audience: in 3-D films, HOUSE OF WAX — Ping-pong balls. BWANA DEVIL — Spear. FORT TI — Most things. FORT BRAVO — Snake (with head blown off, but still wriggling). PHANTOM OF THE RUE MORGUE — Gorilla (wrapped in venetian blind). MAN IN THE DARK — Surgical instruments prodded into camera eye. HONDO — John Wayne.

MONDO CANE

(see over)

Top: In the Malayan Straits a shark's mouth is crammed with sea urchins so that it will die in lingering agony. MONDO CANE shows the vile proceedings in salivating detail.

Centre: In a Portuguese bull-ring the tormentors of the animal endeavour to remove one of their number from its horns. MONDO CANE is still at the ringside as the broken body gets carried out.

Bottom: In New Guinea a herd of pigs is clubbed to death for a native ceremonial feast. MONDO CANE uses a zoom-lens for each kill and gets in close for the subsequent disembowellings.

MONDO CANE
The title, freely translated, means it's a bitch of a world, and that is precisely what MONDO CANE sets out to prove, without subtlety or mitigation, but in full colour with a sweeping orchestral and choral accompaniment. A purportedly serious and sober documentary, the film is in fact a collection of bizarre, bloody, and nauseating sequences shot all over the world and roughly linked by the theme of man's basic lack of humanity. As one-sidedly candid-camera as THE SAVAGE EYE, as lushly superficial in approach as Blasetti's I LOVE, YOU LOVE, MONDO CANE is calculatingly pernicious, and will doubtless reap world-wide enthusiasm from (club) audiences as vociferous in their enjoyment as were the frightening Festival houses at Cannes.

For addicts of violence and sadism, this is the film of their sickest dreams. Shown in unblinking closeups are the stumpy bodies of shark victims and the revenge exacted upon the sharks themselves, whose mouths are stuffed with sea-urchins; the bleeding legs of participants in a traditional religious festival who lacerate themselves with broken glass; the beating to death by savages of a herd of pigs; and the decapitation, spouts of blood and all, of cattle in a military ceremony. A bull gores a man in a Spanish street, a Hamburg drunk vomits in a doorway, birds are forcibly fed for the restaurant market by machines like coffee grinders shoved into their beaks, and a live snake is ripped open from head to tail for an Oriental customer.

The vitriolic ridicule which MONDO CANE pours upon the human race might appear more fully justified did not the film at the same time encourage its audience to derive entertainment from watching the lower depths of civilisation. Laughter and cheers greeted many sequences at the Cannes showings, and admiring applause accompanied the photography, especially when a flock of birds doomed to sterility by radioactivity flew into the sunset. Presumably this masochistic response is what was hoped for by the trio of directors, headed by Gualtiero Jacopetti, who culled their material from several nationalities of cameramen, and it is a response which undermines the validity of the documentary and sets its level perilously near the pornographic. There is scope for serious investigation and comment on nearly all the subjects lightly treated in MONDO CANE (the perversions of nature on the Bikini atoll have already been dealt with in numerous magazine articles, and even get a scarcely-deserved elliptical mention in Patroni-Griffi's IL MARE), but by lumping them together without analysis, equation, or solution, the film finally adds itself to its parade of monstrosities.

— PHILIP STRICK

MY EYES, NO, NOT MY EYES
"Thirty years of cinema have not blunted this razor" wrote "Presence du Cinema" of Bunuel's UN CHIEN ANDALOU. If it remains "undoubtedly the most sadistic in the entire cinema" it's not for lack of competition. June Cunningham in HORRORS OF THE BLACK MUSEUM receives a pair of binoculars from an unknown admirer; as she adjusts the focus, two sharp spikes spring out into her eyeballs — a nastiness prefigured in, of all films, OKLAHOMA, where Rod Steiger has a telescope with a hidden flick-knife. In the nightmare sequence of THE FACE, Gunnar Bjornstrand nearly plunges his nib into his inkwell, only to see in its depths a staring eyeball. Eyes can also be burned out (Victor Mature's by red-hot steel in SAMSON AND DELILAH), clawed out by hawks (Kirk Douglas's in THE VIKINGS), kicked out by a pretty girl (Ralph Meeker's by Carroll Baker in SOMETHING WILD), pressed out (in PRINCE OF FOXES the first-person camera lens is filled by a thumbs, immediately after which soft grapes are elaborately exposed at the Borgia dinnertable). They may be torn out for religious reasons (as by Oedipus in Cocteau's LE TESTAMENT D'ORPHEE), for poetic reasons (as by the glum beatnik nit of Brakhage's THE WAY TO SHADOW GARDEN, who then sees everything through a negative darkly), or for magic reasons (according to BLACK SUNDAY vampires have to be settled by a stake through the eyes — presumably a rare subspecies). Sometimes, eye-gouging has a Freudian meaning (substituting for castration in the bowdlerised screen version of Tennessee Williams's play SWEET BIRD OF YOUTH) or a political one (in HIROSHIMA MON AMOUR). The cyclops-blinding sequences of ULYSSES is paraphrased in Ernest B. Schoedsack's DR. CYCLOPS, where the heroes, having been shrunk to 6" high, blind their persecutor by smashing his glasses. Indeed, if menaced by a monster, the drill is, strike for the eyes, like Siegfried for the Dragon's in Lang's film, or Theseus for the Minotaur in WARLORD OF CRETE, or for the giant squid's in REAP THE WILD WIND. Cayatte's OEIL POUR OEIL has "a diseased and bleeding abdomen, a rotting mule carcass with a vulture inside it, a razor-slashed arm likely to turn gangrenous" — everything except eyes, reversed in LES YEUX SANS VISAGE. — R. E. D., I. K. J.

Footnote: "My eyes, no, not my eyes!" as spoken, we imagine, by many screen victims, but explicitely by Donald Pleasance in THE FLESH AND THE FIENDS (G.B. 1960: the film with the unintentionally walking, breathing, and winking corpses).

PICKUP ON SOUTH STREET
In the uncut version, noted for a zoom shot into the gravel rash on Jean Peter's face. This is the film where the difference between the good and bad guys is that the good guys never beat the girls with closed fists. — B. P.

PIN TO SEE THE PEEPSHOW, A
In its review of PEEPING TOM, the "Monthly Film Bulletin" with unexpected erudition, gives the precise De Sade references: "'120 Journées de Sodom', especially part IV, and the murderous passions numbers 41 and 46".

Michael Powell has never been too squeamish in creating clammy and sticky atmosphere in his films. "MFB" recalls for us the final bloodstained scenes of THE RED SHOES, and the character in A CANTERBURY TALE with a penchant for putting glue into the hair of Kentish maidens, and we might add the frustrated nuns of BLACK NARCISSUS or the clash between spiritual and carnel love in GONE TO EARTH, alone. Not that it would

be so difficult to give quite an account of violent moments in the British cinema, as in any other national cinema, if one cared to do so. All the same, PEEPING TOM is probably the classic of its genre, and by a most fortunate combination of talents, one of the best British films of recent years.

A pleasant air of comforting, healthy, realism surrounds the film which makes us clearly aware that in the midst of life, as it were, we are in perversion. From Brenda Bruce's prostitute's case-hardened "It'll be two quid", and her casual undressing at the beginning of the film, to Miles Malleson's portrayal of an elderly voyeur buying pornographic pictures under cover of educational books, we are thrust into a side of realism which makes Free Cinema's brand of reality look like — the cliché dies hard — expurgated Enid Blyton.

The script, by Leo Marks, is remarkably intelligent, and embodies almost certainly the most sophisticated monster plot ever devised. Poor, sad-eyed Mark Lewis (Leo Marks' name back to front?), perverted, via voyeurism by his sadistic father (= mad scientist) who uses him as a guinea-pig in his study of the psychology of fear and later scotophobia, has become obsessed with the lust to murder (= mad monster, a civilised werewolf). He protects his camera as if it were his virility, and examining the semi-nude inverted image of Pamela Green on a photographic plate taps his fingers in rhythm with Pam as she taps her behind. Worst of all, his method of killing is nothing if not original. "Do you know what the most terrifying thing in the world is?", he asks. The answer, no less, is fear itself. So Mark not only stabs his victims through the throat with the sharpened end of his phallic camera tripod leg, but he clips a mirror to the front of his camera for his victims to watch their own fear and death, at the same time as he makes a movie documentary with his phallic long mm. lens camera. Not that Mark doesn't realise the ultimate penalty for his form of perversion. The law is bound to catch up with him sooner or later. While illegally preparing to photograph a studio extra (Moira Shearer — a red-head. Michael Powell likes red-heads) a little while before plunging his tripod into her throat, he mentions "you stand to lose your job — I stand to lose nothing", and one tends to add with Hamlet, "except my life, except my life, except my life".

For all its sickness, and despite its undoubted and doubtful commercial intentions, PEEPING TOM is a sad and beautiful film. Part of its charm is that the characters are immensely sympathetic, and for part of the time, at least, it is not too difficult to identify with Mark. As such it is part of a tradition of the cinema to perform the all but impossible task or making us forgive and pity the sadist (viz. the child murderer in M (Lang and Losey versions), THE SNIPER, Jack the Ripper, or in a way, even GRIP OF FEAR). Undoubtedly this is partly through Carl Boehm's delicate portrayal of Mark and part of the exhileration of the film is that we want to hate Mark for his victims' sakes, but cannot. Poor Mark is so desperately overshadowed by his father, whose influence he tries to, but cannot escape: it's his father's house, his father's laboratory, and as we shall see, his father's compulsions, which put him in

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his present desperate position. When Mark seeks advice from a psychiatrist the man is only impressed by the achievements of Professor Lewis. And so to the sick ending, heard only as a recording from long ago: "Don't be a silly boy there's nothing to be afraid of", and the pity and tenderness of Mark's reply, "All right, daddy, hold my hand", as he joins his father in some sort of hell cum heaven where sad sadists go.

And for likeably characters, who's to beat Anna Massey's Helen Stephens (another red-head), who rents a flat in Mark's house and with whom Mark falls shyly and haltingly in love?: a warm sympathetic children's librarian, who panders to childish fantasies not by dropping lizards on beds as Mark's father had done, but by writing them fairy-tales. ("A scientist drops a lizard onto a child's bed and good comes of it?" she asks.)

Mark is no sheer sadist. He reacts to kindness, and the relationship between Mark and Helen is very touching — his sad, repulsive, perverted, replacement of Helen's kiss by a lens turret (lens fetishism is something new to me, but there is a weird scene in the otherwise "normal" THE SAD YOUNG MEN, where a girl substitutes her lover for a ciné camera), the sad dedication "from one magic camera who needs the help of another" left by Helen beside Mark's projector just before the end. And if you look for a message film, I think in PEEPING TOM you will find it in the perversity behind beauty, like the deformed lip on the face of the beautiful model Mark is one day sent to photograph — a theme explicit in CIRCUS OF HORRORS, another, though unimportant, Anglo stabbing film.

If you are alert to the signs, you will spot that Mark identifies Helen with his dead mother. There are at least two clues (as I recall it Mark puts his hand on Helen's shoulder at a crucial moment in a play-back of his old movies, and we are left in no doubt as to what he is thinking as he looks around his mother's room, now occupied by Helen.) Œdipus, in fact, plays an important role in PEEPING TOM. Hatred of father derives not only at resentment of the experiments, but at dad's treatment of mum. Mum obviously has little to say about the experiments on young Mark, and Mr. Lewis marries a sexy young thing only six weeks after his first wife's death. Obviously there is no love lost between Mr. and Mrs. Lewis, in fact for all we know dad might even have killed mum. Now here indeed is good reason for Mark to hate his father and love his mother. But here's something else. The first shot we see of Mark's step-mother is of Venus rising from the waves: an extremely buxom thing rushing out of the sea and bursting all out of her very brief bikini. She isn't so very much different from those photographic models Mark takes dirty pictures of in his spare time. "Look at the sea" says Mark to an astonished model (whom he later murders), and it isn't too much to imagine that he's having a (conscious or unconscious?) recall of something his father said to his new mother. So there's certainly something very odd going on: Mark identifies Helen with his real mother, and his victims — all sexually precocious in some way or another — with his stepmother. In other words, Mark's œdipus complex takes on a dual role — respect for his real mother and Helen, oedipal sadism for his step-mother and his victims.

Significantly, Mark is not too fond of keys, an obvious phallic symbol. Helen, on the other hand, was given a massive key on her twenty-first birthday. As Mrs. Stephens, Helen's mother, says before packing her daughter upstairs to Mark's room: "We both have the key of the door — mine needs oiling, yours needs exercising". (It is doubtful whether Helen is a virgin, for when Mark, who has all the rooms wired for sound, plays back her old boy friend and neighbouring flat-dweller's taped seduction conversation, she seems mighty anxious to turn it off. And the feeling in the film is whether Helen is deceitful, like all women, unfaithful). At the end of the film, however, Mark is given a key by the owner of the dirty bookshop, who leaves him alone with a model to take some photographs. None of Mark's previous victims had been quite so sexually provocative as young Milly (Pamela Green), but his step-mother had gone one better, even a souped up Milly. And perhaps, as we have noticed, Mark had already identified Milly with step-mother when he told her to "look at the sea". Is it too much of a guess to say that at the last, and fittingly, Mark's compulsion was satisfied?

Appropriately enough, in a film about a peeping tom, the eyes have it. The opening shot is of an opening eye, and throughout the film the camera eye predominates. There is no need to elaborate on the phallic symbolism of the camera lens and tripod, and the Freudian overtones of the fact that Mark is a focus puller in a film studio are obvious. Helen's mother, who like Tiresias, senses that Mark isn't quite all right, is blind (in contrast with peeping tom), is an old woman (Mark Lewis is a young man), rough-tongued (v. soft-spoken Mark), drinks heavily, has a stick (v. Mark's tripod), and like Nemesis has an "all-seeing" eye. She is in fact the "witch" mother, or wicked stepmother-in-law: appropriately enough for the mother of a weaver of fairy-tales. It is little wonder that Mark is frightened by her, and the scene where he attempts to kill Mrs. Stephens in his dark room, but ends by fleeing from her, takes the form of a duel, a trial of strength. Going back to the Oedipus tack, it is worth remembering that Oedipus blinded himself, which makes Mark's awareness that he is a compulsive pervert (closely linked with camera-eye substitution for the penis) all the more ironic, for it relates with the lovely slow-motion shot of the pencils falling down from Mark's pocket (= castration) as he spies on the police investigating the extra's murder. All the same, it could be argued that Mark lost the effective use of his genital organs, long, long, ago. Scaring a child with a lizard is all very well, but it has its phallic significance. So too, in the context of a peeping tom, has shining a bright light into a child's eyes: the blinking brightness of the light, symbolically blinds and perverts to the camera eye. There is even room for a joke (in some ways PEEPING TOM is an immensely funny and cheerful film): when challenged with his camera Mark claims to represent "The Observer". (Later we are told

A peep at the export-strength version of "Peeping Tom".

about a pin-up 'photo that: "you don't get that in 'Sight and Sound' ").

When we watch PEEPING TOM we are really watching four films. One is Mark's documentary. The other three are by three different directors, who are all really the same man. There is Mark's father who makes films of the experiments on Mark, and who is played by Michael Powell. There is the director at Mark's film studio (played by Esmond Knight) whose name is Arthur Baden = Baden-**Powell** = the man who looked after the welfare of little boys. And there is Michael Powell, the director of PEEPING TOM. The black and white films of the experiments on Mark as a child, like the "memory" shots in THE MIRACLE WORKER, remind us of Nazi film records. In THE MIRACLE WORKER, the concentration camps; in PEEPING TOM, appropriately enough, clinical experimentations. The present in colour versus the past in black and white is, in fact, the device used by Resnais in NUIT ET BROUILLARD. And when Dad in the movie, gives Mark a ciné camera as a present, a cut-in shot of the actual camera at rest, yet still existing today, reminds one of a concentration camp relic, an instrument of torture. The tape-recording machines in Mark's room, loaded with ghastly wails, screams, and whimpers have the same effect too. And the grim piano music which accompanies the "news-reel" shots, should make every NFT client think twice about the source of the pleasure he derives from silent retrospectives.

Actually, the problem in PEEPING TOM is to know who is the voyeur. Is it Mark? Or is it the victims who watch a movie of their own death? (You do see THE CONNECTION, don't you?). Or is it us, the cinema audience? For Michael Powell often takes us behind Mark's camera, thus making voyeurs of us all. One might feel a little uneasy over Mark's dark room cum projection room, too, for, filled with all his atrocious documents, doesn't it represent the secret place for all our own secret, dark, perverted, thoughts? Magic mirror on the wall, who is the nastiest of us all? — it's folks like you and me, who came to see a film called PEEPING TOM . . . — IAN JOHNSON

PSYCHOLOGY OF AGGRESSION

What are the elements which must be included for a film to be described as a violent or horror film? Methods of analysis regarding this must, if they are to be of any use to the psychologist, be qualitative. A quantitative analysis of incidents involving violence is useless, presupposing as it does that all incidents are psychologically similar. That all cases are **not** the same is obvious; the number of Indians who fall dead in a scene is less important than the way violence is presented, the production techniques used, and the extent to which the personalities of the heroes and the villains and their motives are defined. For violence on the screen to be most effective it must not be conventionalised, as is the case with many Westerns. It must be realistic and personal. When I speak of violence it is with this that I am concerned. Where the camera, the music and the effects all underline the realism. Seeing the odd Indian "hit the dust" is hardly more violent than Mickey Mouse, usually because characterisation of the Indian is not sufficiently enlarged upon. Violence becomes far more realistic if the viewer can identify himself with one or more of the characters concerned. It is for this

reason that children's Westerns such as the LONE RANGER are considered to be relatively harmless although a great number of gunshots are fired both by and at the hero. The hero, always on the side of **goodness** invariably beats his opponent who represents **badness** and whose characterisation is never very complex. The character of cinema violence is then decided by its overall presentation, the production techniques (lighting, etc.), and the potential for individual association. It is not likely that the expending of vast amounts of ammunition constitutes in itself a violent movie, although there may possibly be some cumulative effects in such a case.

* * *

The psychological explanations of the origins of man's seemingly innate aggressiveness are as varied as they are many. Freud's contribution to the controversy developed during his lifetime from 1905 when he regarded aggression as the part component of the sexual instinct ("Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality"), to his final conclusion that there actually was an aggressive instinct in man, which he recognised as the Death-instinct ("Beyond the Pleasure Principle" 1920). Melanie Klein, a post-Freudian, upheld this view adding that aggressive fantasies sprang from a deflection of the Death-instinct outwards. Adler on the other hand saw the aggressive nature in man as a "striving for superiority" while Jung's view is that innate aggression is that aspect of psychic energy of which the ultimate function is the differentiation of the individual as a self-determining entity. The Dollard and Doob study "Frustration and Aggression" took the Freudian lines that the occurrence of aggressive behaviour always presupposes the existence of frustration and contariwise, that the existence of frustration, always leads to some form of aggression. (Aggression here being defined as an act whose goal response is injury to an organism or organism surrogate.) The hypotheses here defined and their relation to the film are the major concern of this article.

Dollard's major premise is that interference with the occurrence of an instigated goal-response at it's proper time in the behavioural sequence leads directly to substitute response. This he defined as being any action which reuces to some degree the strength of the instigation, that is, the original goal response which had been prevented from occuring. Thus the substitution response does have some of the properties of the goal response itself, in that it too can have the strength of instigation. The substitute response the theory claims to be aggression. Where this form of outlet is socially disallowed or would lead to heavy penalties on the individual, Dollard suggests the occurrence of aggression displacement. This displacement can be against different objects, but can also radically change the form that aggression takes. **Sublimations are socially approved modifications of aggression.** Of particular interest to us is Dollard's notion that changes in the form of aggression could be the cause of sadistic imaginings, violent dreams and the interest shown in horror films and books. He relates that an increase in sales of horror books came as a result of an increase in the level of frustration.

Thus Dollard's assumption is that the inhibition of any instigated goal-response is a frustration which increases the instigation to aggression. Conversely the occurrence of any act of aggression is assumed to reduce the instigation to the original goal-response. In psychoanalytic terminology such a release is called a catharsis. Thus the expression of any act of aggression is considered to be a catharsis since it reduces the instigation to all other acts of aggression.

This theory is the most popular explanation of the appeal of films involving violence. The viewer it is held is relieved of his frustrations and inner tensions by transferring them to the situation on the screen. Society's stringent norms involving overt violence and sexual behaviour have channelled these more basic drives for self assertion into harmless sublimations. And some film makers claiming academic ties see in the movie another sublimation. A harmless outlet for socially unacceptable hostile feelings. By identifying himself with the heroes and criminals involved, the individual finds an outlet for his pent-up aggressive feelings in fantasy. On this subject Mayer in "Sociology of Film" goes further by saying: "I am perhaps not greatly mistaken in saying that the vicarious satisfaction of sexual and aggressive tendencies providing compensation for where concrete life has not given to the individual — love, happiness, appreciation, success, position, supremacy — constitutes the main gift which the movies are able to present, with such variation and regular frequency, with such appeals to individuals of all types, on a scale which has apparently been approached by nothing else yet known in social history. The overwhelming majority of people feel more or less frustrated, feel more or less a tendency towards aggression and revenge under the influence of the particular conditions of their life. And there is no doubt about the satisfaction-value of the cinema . . . By the process of identification with the actors of the play the spectators gain a temporary satisfaction of their own ambitions and of their tendencies to revenge."

However, the validity of all this has recently been under heavy fire, particularly the idea that it is possible to discharge one's anger vicariously by watching a violent film sequence. The report on television and juvenile delinquency made in 1956 by a United States Senate Sub-Committee under the chairmanship of Senator Kefauver, although not primarily concerned with the movie itself, reached several important conclusions. Testifying before the committee social psychologist Eleanor Maccoby asked that if it is true that a child can get some discharge of his aggressive feelings by viewing aggressive activity on television or some other media, how long does the relief last? She also pointed out that this discharge in fantasy alters nothing in the child's real life and so has no lasting value. Again not everyone who watches television (or film) does so out of frustration; he is as likely to watch for other reasons, and aggressive feelings may be aroused in him, rather than quietened. What is more it seems likely that when these feelings are aroused they are not as a rule discharged on viewing crime and violence: they are in fact just as likely to be aroused as lessened by these films. Indeed the Himmelweit study believes this to be more often the case. It is only fair to add here, that both the Himmelweit and Maccoby reports believe that violent programmes do not initiate "aggressive, maladjusted, or delinquent behaviour, but may aid its expression."

Another set of data comes from R. S. Albert. ("The role of the Mass Media and the effect of aggressive film content upon children's aggressive responses and identification choices.") He examined the extent to which the end of the film determined how far aggressive feelings were aroused or quietened; also the extent to which a child's aggressiveness determined the effect of the programme. In general the result was to show that the degree of aggressiveness of a child determines how he will react, and that children's aggressive feelings were as likely to be aroused as reduced through the showing of these conventional programmes.

Although the references quoted refer more directly to the effects of violence in television films and particularly upon children, many of their findings can usefully be extended to the cinema. The necessity of depending upon work in another media is indicative of the lack of good academic studies on this aspect of the cinema.

An article which appeared recently in "New Society" entitled the "Psychology of Aggression" by Anthony Storr rejected the theories of Freud, Klein and Dollard on this subject in favour of the Jungian approach; that is, the development of the individual is ultimately governed by the search for his own uniqueness. Storr sees aggression as that aspect of psychic energy of which the ultimate function is the differentiation of the individual as a self-determining entity. Impulses to violence in man he believes to have a positive function, vital to the independent life of the individual. He hypothesises that aggression "is a primary dynamic factor which cannot be eradicated. This is not to deny man's cruelty and hostility, but to point out that such behaviour is a distortion and a misdirection of energy which, where conditions allow, urges men in the direction of independence, maturity and freedom."

Storr's view of aggression can, I believe, be viewed in term of the cinema. The present system of things in modern capitalist and socialist societies is such that whatever may be **theoretically** in store for the individual **in practice** it is obvious that few become wholly mature, independent beings. In communist societies the concept of individuality is submerged to a great degree under the idea of the "state", while in the Western world class, colour and religious barriers do in some form or another work against the complete self-expression that Storr seems to be advocating. When the general trend in Britain and America is towards the creation of a stereotyped middle-class, who talk, think and dress alike, there can be no talk of the independent life of the individual. Additionally the term "freedom" is a very relative and limited term. How free is man really when the frown of public opinion can act as a far more effective sanction (for good or bad) than any punishing court-of-law? No well governed and functioning society on the massive scale of to-day's state-society can afford any large degree of independence for its most important factor of production: the mass body of people. Man is constantly being shaped by the economy: he is at once a producer, who must act with the efficiency and regularity of a piece of machinery, and a consumer, compelled by forces outside himself to consume the efforts of his toil. In these circumstances it is inconceivable that any great independence in the life of the individual can emerge.

According to the hypothesis man's cruelty and hostility are distortions and misdirections of energy whose ultimate function is independence, maturity and freedom. The sameness of everyday life that conventional stereotyped man must endure presents no outlet for "psychic energy... vital to the independent life of the individual". These distortions towards sadism and violence are thus to be expected. Only in fantasy can aggressiveness be unlimited. This is a reference back to the Dollard and Doob theory, but here aggression is not the direct result of frustration. Aggression in entertainment media comes as a result of the distortion of man's search for uniqueness. Societal norms usually prevent overt aggression, but channel it into some less harmful form. The sadistic or horror film is our current example.

It has been my purpose in this article to give brief summaries of a few of the current theories held by psychologists, and probably by film makers too. Considering the findings of the Himmelweit study it must be admitted that there is enormous doubt concerning the film makers' contention that the violent movie acts as a catharsis for the frustrations of the viewer. However the amount of actual emotional damage resulting from filmed violence is not considered to be very great. My own views are that if the pervading theme of aggression is as a result of our "too" well ordered society, then it is the society itself which must be cured. Horror films are merely the symptoms of a sick society. To prevent their being shown would alter nothing. Rather let us take a look at the cause; the system which makes a man into a mechanised factor of production, without soul, spirit or individuality. — RAY CONNOLLY

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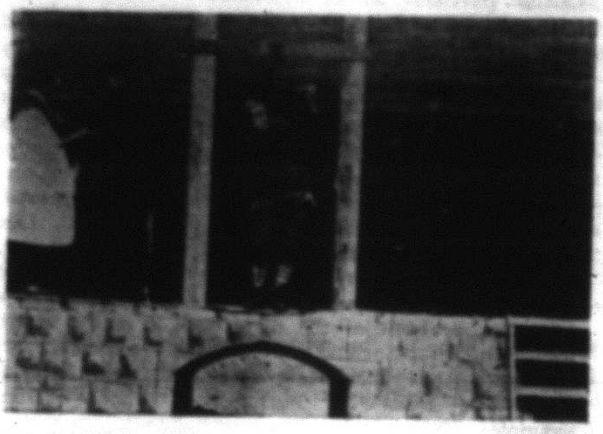
RELIGIOUS WEAPONS

We recall the knife crucifix in VIRIDIANA, or the Wooden Madonna used as a head-thumper on Stephen Boyd in HEAVEN FELL THAT NIGHT. Best of all in Castellani's ROMEO AND JULIET, Laurence Harvey opens Juliet's tomb not, as per text, with "a crow of iron", but, blasphemously, grabs a huge candlestick from the high altar and slays Paris with that. — B.P., R.E.D.



In pre-censorship days: THE LIFE OF CHARLES PEACE, G.B., 1903.

S.F. — THE FICTIONS AND THE FACTS

Since definitions of the term "science-fiction" are to be found in the preface to nearly every anthology I won't start off by attempting to set my own limitations to what I think it means. Science-fiction is something I've been reading all my life without getting bored by it, and it has taken me from E. M. Forster to Charles Addams, from Wells to Thurber, from Orwell to Bradbury and all points outward, and from Braine to Sturgeon and all points inward. In the course of this literary voyaging, which began, I suspect, with embarkation at an early age upon a translated version of the Odyssey, I have met an astonishing number of people to whom their personal definition of science-fiction has meant anathema. They get the shudders not from reading it but from the idea of doing so, and they regard the genre with immutable finality as a form of blue literature little better than pornography.

Admittedly a thaw has became detectable in recent months. JOURNEY INTO SPACE on the radio, QUATERMASS, ANDROMEDA, and the excellent SF series OUT OF THIS WORLD on television, John Wyndham in Penguins, and Kingsley Amis in review, have encouraged by imperceptible degrees a general intellectual warming which has at least disposed of the ice on SF in its place way down in the deep-freeze. From another angle, the nearer we get to seeing the moon violated by human feet the more apparent it becomes that the Van Allen belt is on its way to becoming as much of an everyday problem as a parking meter and that to refuse to think about the uses of satellites means plain political suicide. With a procession of hardware, blown-out rockets, and dead dogs floating in orbit above him, even the most conservative of newspaper readers must occasionally ponder a more than Aristotelian view of the Universe. The ever-present threat of nuclear war means a bit of plain thinking also about one-time fantasies like fall-out shelters, and involves the consideration of how to run a family in radioactive Britain which goes a little further than simply writing a disgusted letter of complaint about the showing of Marghanita Laski's OFFSHORE ISLAND on television.

The technical science-fiction of less than fifty years ago is so busy coming true (predictions made by, among others, Heinlein, Ley, and Clarke, in details of technology are now assimilated essentials of national defence and space programmes), you'd think people would get the idea and start reading up for the next fifty years right now — not, incidentally, a very reassuring mass of literature awaits them when they do. But since there is so little general realisation that SF deals with anything and everything from horse-opera to politics it gets ignored in favour of fiction of more "immediate" interest, such as sordid social realism, war memoirs, and crime. That goes for films as well, from their conception to their exploitation. So embedded is the prejudice stemming from the old Superman serials, the kind of guilt-complex implicit in the discovery of perversion in the Batman-Robin set-up, and the apparently immortal memory of old WONDER TALES cover girls in bikinis and bubble helmets, that an SF theme is prejudged and prepackaged as an inevitable mixture of FLASH GORDON and CREATURE FROM THE BLACK LAGOON, fit only for the cheapest "quickie" budget, and aimed primarily at the bloodsucking moron market.

The most bizarre part of this whole attitude is the refusal on the part of so many readers and film-goers to acknowledge science-fiction when they do come across it — which happens much more often than they like to think. I have encountered so much opposition to the idea that "1984" is SF you'd think I was labelling it a fascist manifesto or a teenage horror comic, and the same is true to a lesser extent of widely known pieces like "Brave New World" and, on a lower level, "When the Kissing Had to Stop". in which, apparently, the fact that it is either great literature or a depiction of the politically possible precludes the fact of it's being also SF. The trouble here is that nobody who doesn't actually read science-fiction knows exactly what it is (not that those who do read it can be definitive on the subject, either), and they fling out judgements on the basis of completely imaginary evidence. You try telling them that there is SF in THE MANCHURIAN CANDIDATE, in KID GALAHAD, in PARIS NOUS APPARTIENT, in DR. NO, or in ZAZIE, and you'll get the pitying iconoclastic gaze the broad-minded reserve exclusively for the small-minded, and which expresses the same paradoxical self-satisfaction as that of a bookseller who said to me recently: "I don't read much science-fiction myself; I prefer to keep a broader outlook on life".

Science-fiction is not the easiest of literature to translate to the screen. Apart from the purely technical difficulties of getting things like alien landscapes to look real there are the more subtle problems of how to turn the essence of classic SF into film material. How, for instance, does one turn "More than Human" into something for people to look at? How does one get Eric Frank Russell's wicked sense of humour in "Men, Martians, and Machines" across on the screen? How can one adequately convey the scope of Asimov's "Foundation" trilogy in a visual medium? Science-fiction writers get a raw deal from the film business because, in fact, their best stuff is too good for it. A film of Alfred Bester's "The Demolished Man" would either have to be a spineless conventionalised travesty of the original or a piece

of virtuosity which would make MARIENBAD look like a children's matinée movie. Neither would really do SF much good.

So in return the film business gets something of a raw deal from science-fiction writers, who if they do turn to scripting, stick, like Richard Matheson who scripts all Roger Corman's Poe pictures, to unambitious subjects. The Matheson-Corman team have a good formula (although so fearful of critical scorn are the distributors that they sneak the films out without Press shows); one could wish, however, that they soon weary of mauling Poe and turn to original material such as Matheson's own "I Am Legend". This is an extraordinarily good horror novel from a writer who more customarily turns out only average quality sick stories, a notable exception being "The Incredible Shrinking Man" which proved very photogenic when it was filmed some years back. "I Am Legend" is a sadistic combination of the cataclysmic, or "I am the last man alive" type of SF, and the superstition-occult, or "put up the garlic, Grandma, the vampires are coming" kind of writing. It could make one of the greatest horror films of all time. On the other, more likely, hand, it could easily be battered into "commereial" shape by the Hammer crowd.

A group of French cineastes is at present extolling the virtues of every Terence Fisher film ever made, under the Hammer banner and elswhere. Since this enthusiasm is only understandable anyway to the Gallic mentality, wherein synthetic Victoriana appears the very essence of things British, there is not much future in pointing out where their arguments are fallacious. Fisher's best film, and indeed the best of all the Hammer cycle, was DRACULA, in which can be seen all the themes, and most of the sets, which appear in varying proportions in his subsequent pictures. There's not much of Bram Stoker in the film, but there is plenty of the ruinous approach to sensitively horrific literature that represents the damage Hammer films have contributed to the popular idea of SF. Superstition-occult films, I hasten to explain, qualify as a branch of SF because their basic themes, such as errant scientists, living corpses, changeable personalities, and the like, correspond to those of many typical SF stories; some people distinguish this branch by calling it science-fantasy (a refinement which I dislike). Something like Fisher's CURSE OF THE WEREWOLF gets regrettably linked with SF because lycanthropy is a medically explicable disease, even when the explanation takes as much swallowing as it does in the never to be forgotten I WAS A TEENAGE WEREWOLF. Then again, a Fisher film like REVENGE OF FRANKENSTEIN exploits the thoroughly revolting angle in the mad-scientist, or "I'm gonna destroy the world", department of SF, and also besmirches with strawberry blood the fair and notorious name of the original Mary Shelley creation.

The general public is to be forgiven if, on the strength of colourful brutality of this kind, it decides that all psychologically slanted SF is a matter of pulsating brains in glass-intestined laboratories, such as get satirised in Henry Levin's amiable riot, WONDERS OF ALADIN, when Noelle Adam's legs hang from the ceiling while an ancient magician cradles the stolen baby amid multi-coloured retort-stands below. Also inevitable is the impression, to be got

ON THE BANDWAGON

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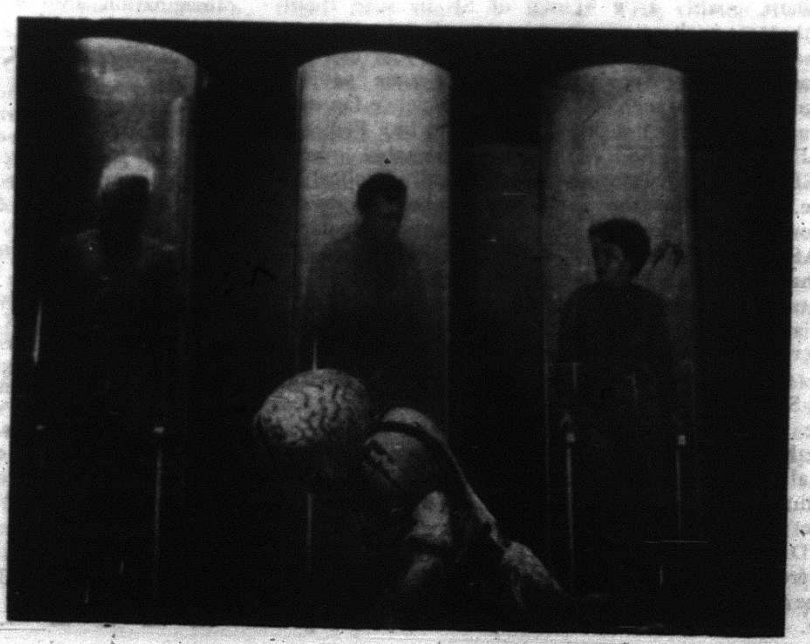
from the KING-KONG, GORGO, REPTILICUS, and CREATURE menagerie, that SF is just a constant variation of the "officer, that ant has just trodden on my wife" theme, and that it follows with the regularity of a life-cycle the well-worn path of Destruction incarnate appearing, killing, and being destroyed in turn (usually by those irrestistible stand-bys, electricity or fire).

In fact, one doesn't meet many cabbages from outer space or unstoppable zombies in true science-fiction country, and I can recall only a few exceptions to the general rule of continence and restraint which keeps sensationalism to a minimum. There are plenty of nasty situations, plenty of struggles with alien ways of life, and plenty of twisted mentalities. But there is also a great deal of poetry, humour, warmth, understanding, curiosity, constructive thinking, and plain common sense. Science-fiction can make beautiful reading, as anyone who has experienced "The Dreaming Jewels", "Fahrenheit 451", or "Tiger, Tiger", must agree. It can also be balefully prophetic ("Level 7", "Anthem"), satirical ("Messiah", "The Joy Wagon"), hilarious ("The Fun House", "Next of Kin"), sentimental ("Dandelion Wine", "E Pluribus Unicorn"), zany ("Skin and Bones", "Star Shine"), action-packed ("Stainless Steel Rat", "Prisoner in the Skull"), and unnerving ("Death of Grass", "The Rest Must Die"). And this parade of adjectives is nowhere near exhaustive.

Only a small portion of the enormous bulk of SF is visible in the history of the cinema. The rest, in iceberg seclusion, floats through bookshops amid a personal shoal of enthusiasts, awaiting, and scarcely ever reaching, the warmer currents of popular discovery. Transferred to the screen, it loses, like so much literature, most of the qualities which made it worth reading in the first place. WAR OF THE WORLDS is a reasonable movie, THE TIME MACHINE is barely adequate, THE LOST WORLD (both versions) is rather terrible, and each of them wreaks murderous damage on the classic original. The invisible men, the Jekyll and Hydes, the captain Nemos, these, too, are varyingly unsuccessful interpretations of what is popularly supposed the essence of SF. The classics in science-fiction of the last ten years remain almost untouched; only now are Triffids being put on the screen, probably to join the procession of animated plaster-casts which trundled with unconvincing menace through "B" pictures of the 1950s and which established the fact that once you show the audience what your characters are afraid of they'll be too busy laughing to be scared (it is, for instance, surprisingly easy to get used to the insect-headed hero of THE FLY). As a form of acknowledgement towards the atomic cloud there has been an increase in cataclysmic films, such as the slick and tasteless DAY THE EARTH CAUGHT FIRE, the over self-conscious WORLD, THE FLESH, AND THE DEVIL, the intermittently successful VOYAGE TO THE BOTTOM OF THE SEA, and the sugary ON THE BEACH. There have been a few reasonable second features like ZOTZ, BEYOND THE TIME BARRIER, and THE MOST DANGEROUS MAN ALIVE. But all-time greats (are they so much to ask of the pre-Space Age?) there are none — and that leaves METROPOLIS, DESTINY, and nearly everything else by Lang, still incontestably at the head of any list of the best SF films ever made. It's a situation ridiculously at variance with the innumerable directions taken by science-fiction literature since Melies first put moving pictures on the moon.

At least the SF adict has a few consolations. The best of the OUT OF THIS WORLD series was the hour-long play COLD EQUATIONS, in which the delectable Jane Asher condemned herself to death by stowing away on a rescue spaceship. Adapted from a good short story, it made fine television viewing that was pure science-fiction — that is, it had warm and living characters going through a not impossible form of private hell as a result of logical technical circumstances of the future. Other oases remembered with affection in the parched desert of television viewing are the version of Asimov's LITTLE LOST



"This Island Earth". Macabre pathos of a dying mutant.

ROBOT, and some months earlier the showing of Robert Sheckley's SEVENTH VICTIM, in which Patrick Magee played a veteran man-hunter with ferocious enjoyment. In the cinema there is the Siegal perrennial, INVASION OF THE BODY SNATCHERS, containing some of the best SF on film, and there are the good chunks and excellent stories of FORBIDDEN PLANET and THIS ISLAND EARTH, which indicate in the luxury of colour what can be done on a large budget. And there are such diverse pleasures as SEVEN DAYS TO NOON, KISS ME DEADLY, THE PHILOSOPHER'S STONE, and the patchy but dedicated VILLAGE OF THE DAMNED, as well as efforts like BARON MUNCHAUSEN and MAN OF THE FIRST CENTURY from Czechoslovakia, and A BOMB WAS STOLEN from Roumania. It remains to be seen whether Truffaut can negotiate the very American nostalgia of "The Martian Chronicles", or whether Losey has worked wonders on the rather poor novel "Children of Light", or how much SF there will be in Hitchcock's THE BIRDS. Like too much of the most advanced and exciting literature of our time, it remains to be seen.
— PHILIP STRICK

SNAKES, up the plumbing
Good for a giggle, as in CIRCUS OF HORRORS (in which it is the weakest episode) and THE TWO FACES OF DR. JEKYLL (the film where Jekyll became Hyde by turning his back on the camera and pulling his whiskers off quick). — R. E. D.

STEELE, Barbara
Albion, as William "Jerusalem" Blake was wont to observe, is the land of men with grey flannel minds and girls with grey flannel nighties: even favourite indoor sports are played by the Marquis of Queensbury's rules ("We don't wish to know what goes on below the belt"). In all the best finishing schools, gym, hockey and rugger are compulsory subjects, and for the suffragettes emancipation meant the right to bat for the "Gentlemen" against the "Players". Seductive women are esteemed almost as low as intellectuals and foreigners, if that's possible, and a man's best friend is his horse or his dog, not, as in America, his Mom, nor yet his mistress, as in Latin countries, which is where our starlets go to come alive. Defeatistly we import sex-kittens galore, while the young English actress turns prim and/or dowdy, or else! (the Jimmy Porters are almost as bad as the Jessons of BRIEF ENCOUNTER, even if they're yelling away on the "up" platform while the others are sobbing on the "down").

When the Rank Organisation signed Barbara Steele, they saw in her (one presumes) a cross between Jean Simmons and Belinda Lee, two earlier fugitives from the chaingang charmschool. As the American campaign sheet for BLACK SUNDAY remarks, Barbara Steele has an "exotic and unusual face" — an art-school face, with something wild and regional, possibly even Mary Webb-ish, a round-square face which chops and changes its character as the lights carve at its neat, stark cheekbones, high forehead. In monochrome, her immense, green-eyes photograph a liquid Italian-black. She is the only girl in films whose eyelids can snarl.

In this clime of dim discretion, English film actresses (and actors, too, mostly) do little more than quiver their voices, hoping that the one-tenth above the surface will imply the nine-tenth below. It sometimes does, but we have a very close and special place in our critical heart for those rare ladies who, like Diana Wynyard in Thorold Dickinson's GASLIGHT can depict the excess, the self-forgetfulness, the heedless ecstasy of unrestrained emotion. Barbara Steele is one of the few to have a vibrato as well as a tremolo. She comes from rep and isn't afraid of old-fashioned ham, in the highest (or Donald Wolfit) tradition. She's still a modern girl, though, and in THE PIT AND THE PENDULUM, gloating over cataleptic Vincent Price, she struck a uniquely ancient-and-modern note of cold, hard hysteria, exceeded only by the frenetic magnetism of the resuscitating demon in BLACK SUNDAY, where her moments of terror were Lualdiesque.

She is the ideal playmate for Bond (bland on top and very, very kinky below). In her first starring part, at 7, she played "Snow White" and ate the only available apple; we feel there's a moral somewhere in her progress from "Snow White" to BLACK SUNDAY. But it would be a pity if her eloquence as a ivctim-monster typed her to horror roles. As Katia, the demon's innocent double, she displayed a heavy, puzzled, sadness, a pure and blessedly unsultry sensuality. Surely vast tracts of virgin territory lie unexplored in a screen personality situated, perhaps awkwardly, but how fascinatingly, somewhere in the regions between a Celtic feminine occultism and a devil-may-care energy. — R. E. D.

STITCH IN TIME, A
After jabbing a hatpin through the keyhole in case the man next door is watching his wife undress, the paranoiad hero of Bunuel's EL, tormented by jealousy, creeps to his innocent wife's bedroom, equipped with: a length of very thick rope, a razor blade, a pair of scissors, a bottle of disinfectant, and a needle and thread. — R. E. D.

SUPERMEN
In Cottafavi's HERCULES CONQUERS ATLANTIS, Antinea's Supermen with their blonde curls and S.S. discipline are surely the Nazi's Aryans? With their slit eyes they look like Dr. No, who, it will be remembered lost both his hands from over-exposure to the Uranian bloodclot. **This explains everything.** Dr. No's claim to have been born of a German father and a Chinese mother is camouflage. He is really the last of Antinea's Warriors, rendered immortal and super-inteligent by radioactivity. He soon polished off old-hat Dr. Mabuse, though that story has yet to be written. Crab Key marks the spot where Atlantis erupted and sank. (However Dr. No wasn't really killed in the reactor, only momentarily stunned — in Episode 2 the black hands will emerge from the water...).

Incidentally, what Freudian slip made the "Monthly Film Bulletin" call the Supermen "black warriors"? And was Anita Ekberg's curly bearded muscleman rock-n'-roll partner in LA DOLCE VITA playing a part in Cottafavi's film? — R. E. D., I. K. J.

TEMPER, TEMPER BURNING BRIGHT

There is a warning against it in the Pete Smith item in ZIEGFRIED FOLLIES. A typical New Yorker is trying to 'phone from a public call box in a hotel lobby to a subscriber in the next block. Telephone and operator between them reduce him to a blubbery mass of rage and despair. He is on his knees, about to wreck the suavely diabolical apparatus, when he finds himself looking at a pair of cool elegant legs, a sleek young lady composedly dials South Africa, is put through immediately, calls the man at the other end "a big baboon", adds "that goes for you too" and favours our hero with a smart and absolutely gratuitous kick up the behind.

Moral: women are better suited to civilized life than men, especially American men. — R.E.D.

WALLIS, Hal B.

As a producer, after his time at Warners around 1940, Hal Wallis moved to Paramount where his semi-independent productions fall into three fairly clear groups — prestige items like the Shirley Booth-Daniel Mann-Anna Magnani films, popular efforts like the Martin and Lewis and Elvis Presley vehicles and a number of violent melodramas with a bitter, Clifford Odets-like assessment of human motives.

Back at Warners, KINGS ROW's sadist surgeon and the love affair with the demented Betty Field character, Cassandra, show the Wallis touch. Here they were balanced by director Sam Wood's own characteristic skill in handling positive themes like the devotion of the girl, Randy (Ann Sheridan), and his friend, Parris (Robert Cummings), to the crippled Drake MC Hugh, played by Ronald Reagan. The apparent influence of this film on EAST OF EDEN and its quite electrifying highlights show up the contemporary "films noirs".

When Curtiz and Hal Wallis got together there was no holding them. CASABLANCA was quite mild but THE SEA HAWK and PASSAGE TO MARSEILLE were full of sweating bodies condemned to the living hell of Devil's Island or collapsing open wounds uppermost into infested swamps. Their later collaboration on Harold Robbin's KING CREOLE offered familiar touches like Presley causing his father to be thugged or villain Walter Mathau taking the gun blast in mid air as he falls off the pier.

There was Wallis' Niven Busch-Anthony Mann-Barbara Stanwyck's THE FURIES and his Milestone film THE STRANGE LOVE OF MARTHA IVERS with Judith Anderson variously mutilated. William Dieterle had shown that expert thrillers could be made without excessive violence as far apart as the 1933 FROM HEADQUARTERS and the 1952 TURNING POINT. He and Wallis, together made two excellent action films that are among the toughest ever. DARK CITY introduced Charlton Heston and ROPE OF SAND filled its superbly anti-moral atmosphere with scenes like the one in which Lancaster is lashed to near death or the fight where his face is forced into the white desert sand to come up with the features standing out skull-like in the glow of the truck head lamps.

The same quality can be found in Wallis' newer work. It creeps round the edges of the Tashlin Martin & Lewis vehicles, ARTISTS & MODELS and HOLLYWOOD OR BUST. His John Sturges westerns are full of it. There is the scene in GUNFIGHT AT THE O.K. CORRAL where Kirk Douglas turns on Jo Van Fleet when she says that he doesn't consider her. ("Kate, you and me, we've never mattered."). Even more telling is the climax where Lancaster as Wyatt Earp is unable to turn back the youngest Clanton boy, (Dennis Hopper) while he himself is avenging his own brother. Again with THE LAST TRAIN FROM GUN HILL the rape of Douglas' wife (Ziva Rodan and the killing of Anthony Quinn's son (Earl Holliman) means that the two friends are forced to the ritual shoot out.

Despite their extremes, there is little in Wallis' films that is comic or distasteful, unlike so many similarly oriented productions. The best of them have a real strength and authority, the look of a personality with definite ideas about what the normal adult neurotic wants to see in a cinema. — BARRIE PATTISON

WAR FILM, The

The violence, of course, is everywhere. The sadism comes in two kinds: deliberate, and ironically accidental. The classic example of the latter remains the hand stretched out of the shell-hole for the butterfly, on the eve of Armistice, in ALL QUIET — suddenly relaxing into eternal stillness as a sniper seizes a last chance. But there are so many others. In IN WHICH WE SERVE, an English naval captain sees a man trying to rescue a comrade, only to be machine-gunned alongside him. Hopelessly, he turns away. In THE CRUEL SEA, another English naval captain decides that he must kill Allied survivors in the water from a wrecked ship, in order to destroy the U-Boat which he is sure (or almost sure) lurks beneath them. Rossellini is a master of this sort of savage, unpremeditated joke. Witness OPEN CITY, where an Italian woman (hitherto just a passively unobtrusive spectator in a crowd) unexpectedly glimpses her betrothed being dragged away by the Gestapo: hurls herself frenziedly down the road at the soldiers' van: is, less than a minute later, dead. Or PAISAN. An American trooper is left to guard a Sicilian peasant girl. Via hesitant, disconnected scraps of information, impromptu language lessons, mime, the exchange of photos, they make contact. Then the Germans arrive and shoot the G.I. The girl, stunned and maddened by the removal of her groping, nervously tender acquaintance, gets gun and fires upon them. The other G.I.s don't trust her, and when they hear the shots, they come to the inevitable conclusion: "Why, that dirty little I-tal" We cut to the Germans tipping the girl's body over a ravine. The End. Near the close of the film, too, a little boy wails amid the slumped corpses of his family: and in JEUX INTERDITS, tracers race wickedly whipping up dust towards a little girl's hiding parents, who scream once as they are finally reached; the little girl gazes at the bodies, then holds her dying, quivering dog; it is taken from her and thrown into the river; it floats slowly from sight. The cinema is riddled with such unbearable instances of "the fortunes of war": from the mass carnage of THE LONGEST DAY, where a youngster is slain through mistaking a clicking riflebolt for an Allied

The Noble Savage at bay: Kirk Douglas in King Vidor's "Man Without A Star".

call-sign, and a U.S. parachutist dangles from a church belfry, staring in bemused anguish at an unearthly scene of slaughter as his descending companions are greeted by the Boche — to the simple aftermath of a handless ex-soldier, in THE BEST YEARS OF OUR LIVES, sitting in silent despair as his father undresses him.

And then, the conscious sadism, the acts of cruelty. Again, they range mercilessly from the general (Hitler flooding the underground in THE FALL OF BERLIN and DER LETZTE AKT; the bleeding of children by Nazi doctors in NORTH STAR and THE LAST STAGE) to the particular (in NORTH STAR, a peasant is shot down in his own field; in THE LAST STAGE, and Auschwitz officer smiles sweetly as he gently takes a ball from a small child who has run over to show it to him from her place in a line of children going unsuspectingly to the gas-chamber). The most harrowingly poetic recent additon to the list is the image, in THE COUNTERFEIT TRAITOR, of S.S. warders hosing away the executed heroine's blood from the courtyard in misty morning light, while her imprisoned lover (forced to watch her death) numbly looks on. (Jean Bourgoin's Technicolor is here powerfully delicate . . .). And the solitary plane droning high above a city on August 6th, 1945, in CHILDREN OF HIROSHIMA: tne lid lifted to reveal a charred eyeball in HIROSHIMA MON AMOUR? Were these also sadistic — or merely violent? I wish I knew . . . — DOUGLAS McVAY

WESTERN, The

Physical action has been one of the Western's basic requirements since its childhood, but in the last fifteen years or so, violence has been de-conventionalized and ceasing to be good clean fun has acquired an adult meanness. Indeed when it is ignored, usually in an attempt to be intellectual, the western is hollow and the qualitative term "western" can hardly be applied.

To the "B" western and the traditions which grew up within it the "adult" western owes much, and in the "B" horse opera, violence as such has become so traditional as to be almost invisible. The more pretentious "adult" western accepts the "B" western's traditions and uses them as it requires, bending, altering or rejecting, but constantly referring to its sources. (For instance, Gregory Peck's deteriorating Jimmie Ringo in Henry King's GUNFIGHTER would not have half his power and sensitivity if he hadn't been preceded by dozens of traditional gunmen). Such is the case with violence, which, whether in the tradtionally subtle manner of the "B" western or in the more pointed and forceful fashion of the "A" western, is the real language of the genre, the ultimate and proper conclusion for everything. Violence and its kin are the unquestionable equivalents in actions for regions of human thought that have no verbal expression.

In the "B" western, pure violence is seldom encountered, for its directors, the Lambert Hillyers and Wallace Foxs and Ray Nazzaros who spend most of their time in the one genre, concentrate more on new ways of expressing the traditional action; and within the budget and time allocation (usually about 58 mins) it would be impracticable to start a new line. But the case of Lesley Selander suggests that the spirit of true violence is latent in such directors. After about 15 years in B pics Selander was promoted to larger scale subjects and one of his best, SHOTGUN, was particularly brutal and full of a kind of ascetism. Not only is a town marshall blown to pieces from a close range blast of a shotgun, but Bob Wilke suffers a variation of the old snake torture by which he and a rattlesnake are both strapped down within a short distance of each other by wet rawhide thongs. The drying rawhide contracts and draws Wilke and the snake closer. Into the scene rides Sterling Hayden who is endeavouring to avenge his marshall boss, and to get information from Wilke he refuses to kill the snake until Wilke talks. This cleverly lifts the situation from plain violence to the higher reaches of refined sadism. Later, Zachary Scott is impaled on a tree by Indian arrows and Hayden engages the marshall's slayer in a duel with the symbolic shotgun, which

is that much more violent than the sixgun or rifle.

But it is mainly in the "A" western that this sort of violence is important. The "pen v sword" slogan is reversed and words have a secondary place to physical deeds. In Wyler's bad BIG COUNTRY, the writers have muffed their orgiinal premise that Greg. Peck is a morally superior being. As a result it appears that Peck is a pretty big coward if he won't ride Old Thunder when the ranch hands and his fiancée are watching, but has to attempt it in secrecy seemingly to prove to himself that he can do it at all. This idea is reversed to make the same point. When Peck returns after being "lost" for a couple of nights, no amount of insistence on his part can convnce the crew searching for him that he knew exactly where he was going. In Henry King's equally poor THE BRAVADOS Peck again is the (almost farcical) epitome of the Strong, Silent Hero, obsessed with the idea of tracking down the men who raped and killed his wife. He gets three of them (one especially brutally by laying a triprope, and then shooting him as he hangs head down and helplessly from a tree) before it turns out that they didn't in fact commit this particular crime: it wus four other fellers. The tables are turned and Peck can't believe his opponents. The belief in physical action counts for everything.

Seldom has violence been used to greater effect than in Don Siegel's superb FLAMING STAR. At times the film resembles Bunuel's LAND WITHOUT BREAD in its progression into indignation, for its central theme of raal intolerance — although fairly worked out so that neither Indian or White Man is wholly guilty, likewise depends upon the audience becoming involved in events. The main incidents upon which the theme is dependent are slashed across with an utmost violence, which is more than ugly and to which words could add nothing. In one exquisite scene Dolores del Rio (Indian mother of Elvis Presley and Steve Forrest and wife of white John MacIntyre is mortally wounded by a white man's bullet and attempts to reach the sacred hills where she must die to rest in peace. In the midst of a fierce dust storm, by the subtle use of which we can feel empathy with the woman, and which is also used to propagate the specific physical agony (we can imagine the dust penetrating the open wound, etc.) she collapses and begins to crawl, the effort becoming so great that she dies. McIntyre reaches her, wraps her in his arms and sadly calls her name. Siegel's use of the physical (the dust storm, the crawling action, McIntyre's arms etc.) is skilful and the resultant emphatic feeling of pain shows a subtle and masochistic use of violence. In other scenes, violence is used to foster and intensify our indignation. McIntyre is ambushed by Indians and bravely battles with them. He becomes a pin cushion for their arrows, but still manages to live. (This is obviously a symbolic expression of an idea, man's urge to exist in the face of supreme danger, rather than bare reality). He tries to pull the trigger of his hand gun but it sticks in a chamber. Agonised frustration. A brave heads round to finish him off, but feigning death, McIntyre twists the chamber with his hand and kills the brave before dying himself. The sequence illustrates Siegel's awareness of the very fundamental quality of violence, it demonstrates too, its emotional power when used intelligently.

In Budd Boetticher's films violence plays a predominant part on a strange intellectual level. His westerns are littered with bloody images; a stagecoach driver with a huge Indian war lance in his chest becomes the eye's focal point as the camera cranes down in RIDE LONESOME; an Indian gets an arrow in the neck and heaves around on the ground for a couple of seconds in COMANCHE STATION; Noah Beery jr. is shot in the back in DECISION AT SUNDOWN; Rock Hudson is beaten with a thick buckled belt in HORIZONS WEST — and so on. Boetticher's main thematic preoccupation is with revenge, as bloody as may be necessary. In all these films, there is a clear reason for violence — not excuses for gratuitious violence, but situations and ideas in which violence is endemic. Boetticher continually shows a strong respect for tradition, a thick vein of toughness, and his twin themes of beauty and violence. His TALL T (written by Burt Kennedy) is one of the most violent westerns I have seen. But like Siegel, Boetticher uses violence in a most deliberate manner. During TALL T, seven out of twelve characters die a violent death. Randolph Scott and Maureen O'Sullivan have been kidnapped by Richard Boone and his two henchmen, Skip Homier and Henry Silva, and are being held for ransom. Scott knows Boone is planning to kill them anyway (he has already disposed of two men and a little boy), and that he somehow must turn the tables. The film has a very rigid form, and the first 15 or 20 minutes are concerned with building up character, situation and motivation. But the rest of the film, too, dialogue figures a great deal, allowing Boetticher little opportunity to indulge in any prolonged action. Recognising the need for physical action, he is forced to use an extreme of violence to give his audience, in about 20 seconds, the same feeling of emotional satiety that would prevail after a hectic gunbattle or lengthy fistfight. Thus Henry Silva is shot three times by Scott in painful close up and Skip Homeir is killed with a butcher's knife to die in a pool of blood. In the case of Richard Boone though, Boetticher refines this approach and introduces a further, humanistic element. Boone, a rather unsavoury character for whom robbery and killing are just a way of life or existence, is nonetheless viewed sympathetically. In a conversation between Sott and Boone, it emerges that Boone is quite an intelligent man, starved for some worthwhile company and conversation, and it seems that

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

American International (Black Sunday). **Anglo-Amalgamated** (The Criminal, Fall of the House of Usher — end still). **Compton-Cameo** (Fires on the Plain, The Young and Daring). **Contemporary** (Un Double Tour). **Continental Film Review** (Mondo Cane). **Film Polski** (Zaduszki). **Gala** (Mondo Cane, No Greater Love). **MGM** (La Loi). **Miracle** (Eyes Without a Faee). **Paramount** (Rope of Sand). **Rank** (This Island Earth). **National Film Archive, Publications Dept. of The British Film Institute, The Federation of Film Societies.**

he has taken an implicit liking to Scott, who shares certain of Boone's characteristics. So a sort of unadmitted bond springs up between the two, which creates a moral order for them to abide by, to be broken by both in the climax. Boone finally gets hold of the ransom money, but is unaware that Scott has killed both his henchmen. Halted by Scott he drops the money, but abuses the bond by declaring his faith that Scott won't shoot him in the back if he rides on out. Scott true to his side of the bond cannot in fact pull the trigger and Boone rides away. Safe from Scott, he still hasn't got the money. He decides to risk all in retrieving it but racing back is unable to surprise Scott who blasts him in the face with a shotgun. Screaming and holding his hands over his bloody face, he stumbles agonisingly round the encampment, and collapses in a hut where the two dead men lie. Symbolically he doesn't die with them, and rising again, he leaves the hut and yells out "Brennan" (Scott's name in the film). Then he sinks to the ground and dies. Thus we are made aware of the moral bond which existed between the two, and while not dividing our sympathies, it is obvious Boone has to die: it manifests the equality of the two men. For Boone should not have sacrificed his honour by returning, and equally Scott should not have sacrificed their bond by blasting Boone.

Anthony Mann's work also has a violent streak, but, more than Boetticher, he has created a kind of personal world for his characters to exist in, and they must conform to its requirements — or get out. The Mann world pivots on a sort of nice thoughness which exerts a new moral order over and above the inherent western code of life, and while Mann's heroes aren't especially ethical or "decent" by reference to the common code, they are both these things in relation to this moral order. Mann also feels it quite safe to have his hero shot in the gun hand (MAN FROM LARAMIE), in the leg (FAR COUNTRY and NAKED SPUR) and so on, for this merely strengthens his resolve to get his revenge, a prime motivation for the Mann hero. For he is rather selfish, and not a little lazy, and without having such a large physical stake in affairs, the laziness could dictate another ourse of action.

The world of the western is an eternal one and which can only exist if its traditions are respected. The quality of violence inherent is far more than gratuitous, having been founded on layers of this tradition and if the violence is ever axed out of the genre, then will the Western die. — CHRIS WICKING

WESTERN, Weapons in the

The phallic symbolism of the gun is well known, but variations should be noted in the use of the whip (fllaying and perverse sexual pleasure). It figures in Brando's ONE EYED JACKS (which both acts as a purge and also as an added incentive and assurance that Brando will get his revenge), Selander's SHOTGUN (where it is merely a kind of masochism), Lancaster's KENTUCKIAN (similarly, masochism and also a probable attempt to integrate the use of the whip into frontier life) and two 'B' western heroes, Whip Wilson and Lash LaRue, have each used a whip (Wilson a stockwhip and LaRue the longer normal whip) as a variation on the old sixgun wth little psychological intent, although the climax of KING OF THE BULLWHIP featured a particularly brutal whip duel between LaRue and the villain.

The knife is a more direct and personal means of killing, its wielder, a brutal yet introverted personalit. James Coburn in Sturges' MAGNIFICENT SEVEN typifies the neo-sadistic knife wielder, a deadly snake-like man, graceful yet always ready to strike with an amazingly emotionless power. — CHRIS WICKING

WYLER, William

Like Anthony Asquith, is fascinated by the ideal of pacifism; like Asquith, he can never quite make up his mind to be a pacifist. Still, the waverings are there and register sympathetically. In FRIENDLY PERSUASION, story of a non-violent Quaker community out West, he prevaricates and so, really, deseerates Jessamyn West's story. Perhaps feeling he owed her a film, he made THE BIG COUNTRY. Here parochial Texan pride and violence, personified by Charlton Heston and Carroll Baker, despise pacifistic sea-captain Gregory Peck (who hails from the still bigger country of the seven seas) and Jean Simmons (schoolmarm, i.e., in American iconography, a soft do-gooder). When Jean Simmons is kidnapped and in danger of rape she guards her virtue by sheer moral authority. The final gun-duel between Gregory Peck and one of the badmen asserts both the apparent inevitability of fighting and a providential intervention. Peck's opponent, being evil, cheats, and is shot by his outraged father, Burl Ives, who is bad but not all bad. Casuistry? perhaps, but behind this "loaded" plot it is not difficult to see the Quaker propositions about human nature: evil will turn on itself if the good are kind but firm, there is a certain goodness even in bad Burl Ives, chance is the silent but majestic intervention of God. The long, Homeric, futile fist-fight between Peck and Heston has a massive beauty, and this anti-SHANE deserved better than its critical brush-off. In BEN-HUR Haya Harari persuaded Heston to renounce his thirst for (morally amply justified) revenge. In the final chariot-race, though armed with knife and whip, he never retaliates in kind against Stephen Boyd. The case for Christian pacifism is never easy to argue nor are its implications likely to be popular and Wyler is presumably not an unconditional pacifist anyway (cf. THE DESPERATE HOURS). But one wishes he would devote one film "aside" from his blockbusters, in which to work out and reveal his attitude, all down the line, with no concessions to anything except his own conscience. While we're about it we also wish he'd give up those (Calvinist?) "expiatory deaths" (DETECTIVE STORY, THE CHILDREN'S HOUR) and guilt-ridden renunciations (THE HEIRESS — although Laurence Olivier's guilty bourgeois masochism in CARRIE has a horrible rightness. — R. E. D.

ZUGSMITH, Albert

The only answer to Zugsmith is Piryas in the Swimming pool — RICHARD WHITEHALL.

COVER ILLUSTRATIONS.

Front: No, not Mother Courage, but the Witch in "Black Sunday". "Stare into those eyes — you will be dead to man but alive in death."
Inside front cover: "Brute Force". Left: a stoolie is driven into the hydraulic press. Top centre: Burt Lancaster and bedrock diplomacy. Lower centre: Concrete, corpses and flaming petrol. The prison riot. Right: Attack on the Warden's ivory tower.
Inside back cover: "Rope of Sand". Top left: Corinne Calvert. Lower left: Police-state. Top right: Paul Henreid, whip virtuoso, and victim (Burt Lancaster). Lower right: Injury and the violence of capitalism.
Back cover: "Black Sunday". Top left: "Once every hundred years the undead demons of Hell terrorise the world in an orgy of stark horror!" Lower left: "Only once in a lifetime can you stand the shock!" Top right: "You will talk about it for days — and dream about it for nights!" Lower left: The American advertisement reads: "Please Note: The Producers of 'Black Sunday' recommend that it be seen only by those over twelve years of age." Mr. John Trevelyan apparently considers that the entire British nation has yet to attain the age of puberty.

The End . . . ?

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